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ABSTRACT

The Public Relations Division of the proceedings contains the following 15 papers: "Virtual Issues in Traditional Texts: How Introductory Public Relations Textbooks Address Internet Technology Issues" (Lois A. Boynton and Cassandra Imfeld Gajkowski); "Crisis Public Relations: A Study of Leadership, Culture, Demand and Delivery" (Terence (Terry) Flynn); "An Analysis of the Relationships Among Structure, Influence, and Gender: Helping to Build a Feminist Theory of Public Relations" (Julie O'Neil); "Measuring Public Relations Outcomes: Community Relations and Corporate Philanthropy Programs" (Margarete Rooney Hall); "Journalists' Hostility Toward Public Relations: A Historical Analysis" (Fred Fedler and Denise DeLorme); "The Fools, the Wise and the Meaning Makers Understandings of Publics and Understanding Risk Perception" (Joye C. Gordon); "The Effects of Relationships on Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Future Behavior: A Case of a Community Bank" (Yungwook Kim and Samsup Jo); "In the Face of Change: A Case Study of the World Wide Web as a Public Relations Tool for Art Museums" (Nicole Elise Smith); "A Cross-Cultural View of Conflict in Media Relations: The Conflict Management Typology of Media Relations in Korea and in the US" (Jae-Hwa Shin and Glen T. Cameron); "Asking What Matters Most: A National Survey of PR Professional Response to the Contingency Model" (Jae-Hwa Shin, Glen T. Cameron, and Fritz Cropp); "Leadership and Gender in Public Relations: Perceived Effectiveness of Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles" (Linda Aldoory and Elizabeth Toth); "Five Decades of Mexican Public Relations in the United States: From Propaganda to Strategic Counsel" (Melissa A. Johnson); "Toward an Inclusive Trajectory of Public Relations History: The Contributions of W.E.B. Du Bois to Nonprofit Public Relations Before the Crisis and Beyond" (Kimberly Williams Moore); "International Paradigms: The Social Role of Brazilian Public Relations Professionals" (Juan-Carlos Molleda); "Cross-National Conflict Shifting: A Conceptualization and Expansion in an International Public Relations Context" (Juan-Carlos Molleda and Colleen Connolly-Ahern). (RS)

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Virtual Issues in Traditional Texts:

How Introductory Public Relations Textbooks Address Internet Technology Issues

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Overview of the Problem

Like television and radio, the Internet is quickly becoming a part of everyday life. According to a recent government study, "The Nation Online," more than 143 million Americans, or roughly 54 percent of the population, use the Internet, and an additional two million Americans go online each month ("Report," Feb. 6, 2002). Computer and Internet use has become part of the daily activity log of many Americans. "This trend," according to the online report (2002), "is enriching our world, facilitating our work lives, and providing a skill set needed for a growing economy" (www.cnn.com/TECH/internet/02/06/internet.use/index.html).

The media's use of the Internet is one example of how this technology has become interwoven into the fabric of the mass communication industry. According to Garrison (2001), 90 percent of U.S. newspapers with 20,000-plus readers research information on the Internet or World Wide Web. A survey by Middleberg/Ross revealed that almost all print journalists they surveyed use the Internet to assist them with research and reporting (Pavlik, 2001).

Recognizing the popularity and powerful potential of this communication tool, public relations professionals and educators have begun to integrate the Internet and World Wide Web into the practice and curricula. According to Kruckeberg (1998), "The role and function of public relations will be impacted by societal changes that will occur for a host of reasons, but particularly by the social impact of communication and transportation technology" (p. 236). This pervasive and powerful communication technology also has created great demands on educators. Turk (1999) argued, "One result of our role in the information age is an increasing demand for public relations classes, for trained faculty to teach those classes, for updated curricula to be taught in them and for new ways to teach them" (p. 2). Further, professors must help students develop "technological literacy," (Panici, 1998, p. 54; "The Report of the Commission on Public Relations Education: A Port of Entry," 1999), which goes beyond basic competency of using high technology tools skillfully to understanding underlying social, economic, and legal issues.

Some progress is being made. According to the "A Port of Entry" study (1999), which surveyed public relations professionals and educators to establish criteria for public relations education, about two-thirds of educators polled said they used the Internet and World Wide Web as supplementary tools and for student assignments. Despite this positive trend, educators said they still used traditional classroom media such as videos, paper handouts, and blackboards more frequently than the Internet.

Despite the recognized need for integrating technology into the classroom, some public relations educators have been slow to incorporate these new technologies, due in part to limited resources offered by the schools and in part because educators are not yet comfortable with the technology (Coombs & Rybacki, 1999; Kent, 2001). One tool that might bridge the gap is the foundation of many college classes–the textbook. This rudimentary tool may provide links–both figuratively and literally–to new technology sources.

The purpose of this paper is to explore how textbooks for undergraduate, introductory public relations courses address Internet and World Wide Web technologies. This study will examine the topics and skills that commonly used textbooks address, and will explore some of the challenges associated with staying current in an ever-changing environment. Finally, this paper will make some recommendations of how educators and publishers might address the challenge of information obsolescence in textbooks.

Literature Review: Textbooks and Technology

From basic readers such as "Dick and Jane" to advanced research and methodology texts for graduate students, textbooks have long been fixtures in American classrooms. College professors often model syllabi based on chapters in textbooks or prepare exam materials from texts' contents (Cohen, 1988; Coombs & Rybacki, 1999). While some instructors rely on textbooks as the sole material for the course itself (Cohen, 1988) others use textbooks to help students develop critical thinking skills (Hills, 1980).

According to Lee (1999), textbooks identify and prioritize relevant topics within the discipline. "Textbooks tell much about the state of a field and the relative importance that educators assign to the various sub-fields within it. In that sense, textbooks are the mirrors of any given period, one can learn which topics were considered important at that time and which were considered unimportant" (p. 509). But when that topic is technology, the textbooks might not reflect what is most important even within a year of publication. Keeping abreast of evolving technology can be difficult through a printed medium that may be updated infrequently.

Since technologies such as the Internet and World Wide Web continually evolve and their adoption into the classroom is relatively new, definitive conclusions about their impact on textbooks have yet to be cemented. Scholars recognize the changing pedagogical environment but are still trying to determine how technologies and textbooks can co-exist–if at all. Even twenty years ago, researchers Oakeshott and Bradley (1982) and Gault (1982) recognized the impact of new technologies on books and their changing role in society. Oakeshott and Bradley (1982) observed, "Modern technology is challenging both the form and function of the book and its role as the principal instrument of transmitting accumulated knowledge and new ideas" (p. 1). Years later, however, Lowman (1995) would challenge these claims and maintain that textbooks had remained at the forefront of pedagogical tools and would continue to hold a significant position in classrooms. He argued that despite the technological advances and "computer-rich environment," textbooks' importance in classrooms remained "undiminished" (p. 232-33). Rudenstine (1997) argued in a *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, that new technology, books, and personal interaction all have a place in the process of learning.

Other scholars evaluating the value of textbooks have jumped on the technology bandwagon and encouraged professors to integrate new technologies into the classroom–some even at the expense of traditional textbooks that can become "old, heavy, beat-up, [and] out-of-date" ("A New Hi-Tech Generation," 1997, p. 17). One of the most common complaints by education scholars is the limited scope of the printed page, which can be constrained by a costly and time-consuming publication process. According to Schick (2001), "The world of print textbooks is essentially a zero-sum game: if you add something you must take something away. This need not apply to an online text" (p. 25).

Additionally, some critics have argued that some textbooks can limit student access to different viewpoints. Loveless, Devoogd, and Bohlin (2001) argued that the linearity of texts presents only one voice–the author's. Online information such as newsgroups, journals, and listservs, they asserted, provide students with a wide variety of views. They stated, "Not only can one read an article and the associated links online, but one may also explore and even write alternative points of view in response to the articles which are archived for readers to pursue" (p. 77). Van Leuven (1999) indicated that learning is enhanced through the use of a variety of interactive techniques that allow students to engage peers and instructors in discussion of different ideas. Public relations researchers Coombs and Rybacki (1999) noted that public relations educators surveyed by the National Communication Association in 1998 "bemoaned the dearth of teaching materials such as simulations, games, videos, and instructional media in general" (p. 61).

In recent years, research has appeared assessing the use of electronic communication media as both the topic and curriculum resource in teaching mass communication and public relations courses (see, for example, Blake, 2000; Coombs, 1998; Curtin & Witherspoon, 1999; Gower & Cho, 2001; Ha & Pratt, 2000; Heath, 1998; Huesca, 2000; Lissauer, 2000; Neff, 1999; Panici, 1998; Sutherland & Stewart, 1999). Authors generally concluded that new technology has a place in classroom instruction to prepare students for the real world. Specifically, public relations educators and professionals have identified high technology topics as essential elements within undergraduate and graduate curriculum.

For example, the 1999 study, "A Port of Entry" (1999) identified Web design and new media strategy development among its laundry list of skills that undergraduate public relations students should attain. Similarly, the Internet made the list of skills that entry-level applicants need to get public relations jobs, in a study of educators and professionals conducted by Stacks, Botan, and Turk (1999). There was little indication, however, of what "Internet" entails, although skills listed related more to creating communication tools than for conducting primary and secondary research. Van Leuven (1999) also posited that public relations students should be equipped with Internet and other computer-based technologies, including "Web page design, CD ROM productions, digital photography, digital video editing, and related audio-visual media" (p. 81). Both research and communication tool topics are covered, although there is more emphasis on new public relations practitioners' knowledge of tools to create Web communication vehicles. As Van Leuven (1999) explained:

> Entry-level practitioners should have the knowledge to determine which forms of visual and interactive communication are best fitted to particular publics, strategies and messages. Beyond that, students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of design and layout principles, computer skills, software proficiency and message design. (p. 83)

Use of Internet and World Wide Web resources is not without its problems, however. With information constantly changing and access to virtually unlimited voices, some scholars warn that students using these communication tools as primary sources of information will suffer from information overload and the goal of learning will be defeated. With more than three billion Web documents in cyberspace ("Google," Dec. 11, 2001), the World Wide Web's expansive universe of information is staggering. According to Faigley (1999):

> Finding information on the World Wide Web has been compared to drinking from a fire hose. The quantity is overwhelming, even with experienced researchers. . . . For those new to the [W]eb, it is like a vast library with the card catalog scattered on the floor. You can spend hours wandering serendipitously on the [W]eb just as you can spend hours browsing in the library. (p. 134)

Further, unlike traditional textbooks, the Internet and World Wide Web do not offer any guidance in selecting or analyzing materials. The absence of a structured roadmap may make it difficult for students to discern what information is relevant or important and whether the information provided is accurate and reliable. Gower and Cho (2001) contended that students should be taught to examine the "capabilities and limitations" of Internet technologies (p. 91). Osborn, Jones, and Stein (1985) argued, "While there may be people who believe students should be able to learn from just about anything, a number of researchers have found that the more organized and readable a text, the more students will learn from it" (p. 12). Students in Besser, Stone, and Nan's study (1999) pointed to the value of textbooks that were well organized and up to date.

This literature review has pointed to advantages of textbooks to identify relevant discipline topics, but presents challenges in addressing rapidly changing technologies such as the Internet and World Wide Web. With these issues in mind, this research project examines some of the introductory public relations textbooks to identify how the subject of Internet technology is addressed. Specifically, researchers sought to identify what topics are being presented and the tone of material about Internet and World Wide Web technology.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The overarching question emerging from the literature review is, how do public relations textbooks address Internet and World Wide Web topics and issues? Specifically, this study examines textbooks used in undergraduate introduction to public relations classes. These foundation classes typically set the tone for concepts and issues of importance to the public relations profession. Specific hypotheses addressed by this study are:

H1: Introduction to public relations textbooks assessed for this study will have at least one chapter dedicated to Internet and World Wide Web technology. As the literature has shown, Internet technology is considered important to communication and public relations practices, and ample information is available to warrant at least one chapter on the subject.

H2: The textbook chapters on the Internet and World Wide Web will focus more on the use of the Internet as a communication tactic tool than as a research tool. This finding is expected despite the definition of public relations as a management function employing two-way communication. According to definitions of excellent public relations, practitioners should focus more on managing issues and understanding their publics than creating communication tactics including Web tools (Guth & Marsh, 2000; Turk et al., 1999). Research shows, however, that more emphasis has been placed on student ability to create Web pages, and to engage in dialog via e-mail and listservs.

H3: The Web links presented in these textbooks will be in working order. The assumption here is that the sites selected for the textbooks will be broad enough and/or well known enough to last the life of the textbook edition. Additionally, despite the fact that the textbook's technology information may become obsolete rather quickly, the Web links may more adequately present current information.

H4: The tone of the textbooks will present Internet and World Wide Web technology as a *new* opportunity for practitioners. Although this technological advancement has been identified as a valid public relations vehicle for several years and undergraduate students have some knowledge of the medium, there is still a penchant for textbook authors to discuss it as a new approach for budding practitioners to employ.

H5: There will be more pages devoted to the Internet and World Wide Web issues outside of the dedicated technology chapters than in the technology chapters. The assumption here is that, despite the presentation of the Internet as new and unique, authors will recognize its prevalence and incorporate high-technology issues in other chapters, such as those dedicated to research, media relations, investor relations, writing skills, law, and ethics. Additionally case studies involving high-tech companies and interviews with practitioners who work in high-tech organizations or jobs may be incorporated outside the Internet technology chapters.

Method

Many textbooks are available that address introductory public relations concepts; however, all of them are not assigned reading in American college and university public relations courses. Researchers chose to identify those textbooks used by public relations instructors in recent introductory classes, and content analyze the presentation of Internet issues within those books.

A two-prong approach was employed to search for textbooks. First, the *2001-2002 Journalism and Mass Communication Directory* was used to identify United States colleges and universities with public relations majors, degrees, tracks, sequences, departments, programs or specialization, and with an affiliation with the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication (ASJMC). Listings for colleges and universities meeting these criteria were scanned to locate Web addresses. Each school's Web site was searched for course syllabi and other information that would indicate what textbooks have been used in introductory public relations courses in the last four years. Researchers limited the timeframe of course syllabi to between 1999 and 2002 because of the pervasiveness of Internet and Web technology by this time.

Second, to supplement the search of university and college Web sites, a general search was conducted using the search engine, Google, which was recognized by Search Engine Watch, *PC World* magazine, *Forbes*, and Yahoo! in 2001 for its comprehensive service (Industry Awards, 2001). Key words "public relations" and "syllabus" were used for the time period 1999-2002. These search terms were kept broad because it was expected that introductory undergraduate public relations classes would have different names. A manual search of the results was conducted to identify syllabi for undergraduate public relations courses taught from

1999-2002. Introductory course syllabi were then examined to identify textbooks used for these classes.

The identified textbooks were analyzed to identify the content and tone of material regarding Internet and World Wide Web technologies and concepts. Specific content sought in these textbooks included:

- Identification of a dedicated Web site for the textbook;
- Inclusion of at least one distinct Internet technology chapter;
- Discussion of key topics within the technology chapters and glossaries. Basic, introductory terms including domain name, HTML, listserv, and search engines were sought, as well as terms associated with newer techniques including streaming audio and video, and downloadable audio and video. Terms were identified from topics addressed in recent public relations trade and research journals.
- Inclusion and accessibility of Web links throughout the textbook;
- Tone of the Internet technology chapters. Specifically, this study sought to determine whether Internet technology is considered new or has been integrated as a standard practice. For this study, "new" was defined as discussion of Internet technology as an emerging, recent, or revolutionary innovation. "Standard practice" was defined as discussion of Internet technology as a communication and research tool fully integrated into the public relations profession.

Both researchers coded the textbooks, and intercoder reliability was calculated using Holsti's formula. The results of the content analysis were entered into SPSS (Version 10.1). Because of the small number of textbooks assessed, results are primarily based on descriptive analysis of frequencies.

Results

A total of 123 colleges and universities were identified within the *2001-2002 Journalism and Mass Communication Directory* that met the screening criteria of having a public relations major, degree, track, sequence, department, program, or specialization, and affiliation with ASJMC. Of the 123 schools, 38 listed Web sites in the directory. Seven of the Web addresses provided in the directory listing did not allow access to the school's site. Only six sites were found to have links to public relations course syllabi for introductory public relations classes conducted between 1999 and 2002. As anticipated, these courses had different names including "Introduction to Public Relations," "Fundamentals of Public Relations," "Principles of Public Relations," and "Public Relations I." Four public relations textbooks (five editions) were identified:

- *Effective Public Relations*, by Scott M. Cutlip, Allen H. Center, and Glen M. Broom, 8th edition (2000)
- *Public Relations: A Values-driven Approach*, by David W. Guth and Charles Marsh (2000)
- *The Practice of Public Relations*, by Fraser P. Seitel, 8th edition (2001)
- Two editions of *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*, by Dennis L. Wilcox, Phillip H. Ault, and Warren K. Agee, 5th edition (1998); and with Glen T. Cameron, 6th edition (2000)

The general search engine search for the key words "public relations" and "syllabus" for the time period 1999-2002 yielded 1,130 hits, primarily listed in reverse chronological order. Further screening of these listings yielded seventeen syllabi meeting the criteria for undergraduate introductory public relations classes taught between 1999 and 2002. Researchers did not select organizations that taught classes as paid seminars at onsite workshops or professional online courses. The syllabi found online identified six textbooks (seven editions), four of which were found in the school Web site search, plus:

- Two editions of *Public Relations: The Profession and the Practice*, by Otis Baskin and Craig Aronoff, 3rd edition (1983); and with Dan Lattimore, 4th edition (1997).
- *This is PR: The Realities of Public Relations*, by Doug Newsom, Judy VanSlyke Turk, and Dean Kruckeberg, 7th edition (2000)

All eight textbooks were analyzed to identify the scope of their Internet technology content and tone. Two editions of two textbooks were coded in an effort to ascertain any changes regarding the presentation of Internet content and the tone of material presented. Intercoder reliability was calculated via Holsti's formula at 0.924.

Five of the eight textbooks include dedicated Web sites for the textbooks. Wilcox, Ault, Agee, and Cameron (2000), 6th edition, incorporates student and instructor resources plus a collaborative network link that provides a chat room and message board (www.awlonline.com/wilcox) that students may use to discuss issues and ask questions. The message board is easy to access, but the chat room was not. The textbook's Web page was last updated in 2000; however, the collaborative network page reflects more recent content through user conversation.

The Guth and Marsh (2000) text identifies its Web site (www.abacon.com/guthmarsh) that features sources for students to review material and access video clips related to textbook case studies, as well as PowerPoint presentations for instructors. No copyright date is provided. Similarly, the Seitel (2001) 8th edition text includes a Web link with course objectives, last updated in 2001 (www.prenhall.com/seitel). Cutlip, Center, and Broom's (2000) text identifies the publisher Web address (www.prenhall.com). Users must then search for the book by title or author. The link (http://cwx.prenhall.com/bookbind/pubbooks/cutlip/) includes summaries and sample questions.

The Newsom, Turk, and Kruckeberg (2000) textbook also identifies the publisher page (www.wadsworth.com), and a search for the book leads to a link with the table of contents, and an instructor link that is password protected. The page was last updated 2001.

Three books do not have Web links specifically dedicated to the texts. Although the 5th edition of the Wilcox Ault, and Agee textbook (1998) includes the publisher's Web address (http://longman.awl.com), a search for the book leads to the 6th edition (2000). Neither edition of the *Public Relations: The Profession and the Practice* (Baskin & Aronoff, 1983; Baskin, Aronoff, & Lattimore, 1997) identifies a Web link.

Only half of the textbooks evaluated include a chapter dedicated to Internet or "new" technology–Guth and Marsh (2000), 38 pages; Seitel (2001), 26 pages; Wilcox, Ault, Agee (1998), 19 pages; and Wilcox, Ault, Agee, and Cameron (2000), 20 pages. It was not surprising that the Baskin and Aronoff, 3rd edition text (1983) did not have a Web page link since Internet technology was only beginning to emerge at that time, and Web pages were not introduced until the early 1990s. The remaining three books, however, were published between 1997 and 2000. Newsom, Turk, and Kruckeberg (2000) indicate in the textbook's preface that they did not incorporate a "cyberspace" (p. xiii) chapter but rather integrated technology issues throughout the book, including its glossary. Cutlip, Center, and Broom (1997) note in the preface of their textbook that technological issues were incorporated throughout the textbook, most specifically in a chapter on corporate public relations.

Five of the eight textbooks (62.5 percent) include more pages with Internet technology references outside of the dedicated Internet/new technology chapters than within those chapters (See Figure 1). It is important to note, however, that all textbooks except the Baskin and Aronoff (1983) book include some Internet technology information throughout the textbook, and not merely in designated chapters.

Figure 1: Number of Pages Addressing Internet/New Technology Topics

Textbook	Within tech chapter	Outside tech chapter
Baskin & Aronoff (1983)	*NA*	*0*
Baskin, Aronoff, & Lattimore (1997)	NA	21
Cutlip, Center, & Broom (2000)	NA	21
Guth & Marsh (2000)	*38*	*33*
Newsom, Turk, & Kruckeberg (2000)	NA	31
Seitel (2001)	26	76
Wilcox, Ault, & Agee (1998)	*19*	*12*
Wilcox, Ault, Agee, Cameron (2000)	20	22

Similarly, all but the Baskin & Aronoff (1983) and Baskin, Aronoff, and Lattimore (1997) textbooks include Web links throughout their textbooks. Wilcox, Ault, Agee, and Cameron (2000) includes 46 more links than the preceding edition by Wilcox, Ault, and Agee (1998), providing an indication that Internet technology has at least been recognized as more pervasive. Interestingly, there are more links listed outside the Internet technology chapters than within the chapters (See Figure 2).

Not all of the Web links are active, however. Cutlip, Center, & Broom (2000) includes the most number of active links (13 out of 15) at 87 percent, and Wilcox, Ault, & Agee (1998) includes the least number of active links (7 out of 11) at 64 percent (See Figure 3).

Figure 2: Web Links Identified in Textbooks

Textbook	Within tech chapter	Outside tech chapter
Baskin & Aronoff (1983)	0	0
Baskin, Aronoff, & Lattimore (1997)	0	0
Cutlip, Center, & Broom (2000)	NA	15
Guth & Marsh (2000)	3	26
Newsom, Turk, & Kruckeberg (2000)	NA	10
Seitel (2001)	4	75
Wilcox, Ault, & Agee (1998)	3	8
Wilcox, Ault, Agee, Cameron (2000)	3	5

Figure 3: Percent of Active Links in Textbooks

Textbook	Within tech ch.	Outside tech ch.	Overall % Active
Baskin & Aronoff (1983)	NA	0	NA
Baskin, Aronoff, & Lattimore (1997)	NA	0	NA
Cutlip, Center, & Broom (2000)	NA	15 links, 13 active	87%
Guth & Marsh (2000)	3 links, 2 active	26 links, 19 active	72%
Newsom, Turk, & Kruckeberg (2000)	NA	10 links, 8 active	80%
Seitel (2001)	4 links, 3 active	75 links, 55 active	73%
Wilcox, Ault, & Agee (1998)	3 links, 2 active	8 links, 5 active	63%
Wilcox, Ault, Agee, Cameron (2000)	3 links, 2 active	54 links, 37 active	68%

Key Internet technology topics covered within these textbooks are identified through headings within the technology chapters and terms listed in the glossaries. Most textbooks focus on the basics, including Web and Internet history, e-mail, Web design, listservs, and online monitoring. The terms most often used as section headings or appearing in the glossary are listed in Figure 4.

Based on technology chapter discussions, placement of technology information in other chapters, and glossary terms, it is apparent that these textbooks place more emphasis on Internet usage to develop and implement communication tactics (e.g., creating and publishing Web sites, sending e-mail to constituents, Intranets for internal communication, media relations, product promotion) rather than for primary and secondary research (e.g., online monitoring, database research, online surveys). The anomaly are the two editions of *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics* (Wilcox, Ault, & Agee, 1998; Wilcox, Ault, Agee, & Cameron, 2000), which present more information on utilizing the Internet for information gathering, monitoring, and data access than on creating communication tools. Significantly more information is provided on the background and historical development of the Internet and World Wide Web in all seven texts with Internet information. Authors include sufficient detail documenting how high technology resources emerged than on actual uses of these tools.

Figure 4: Commonly Used Internet and World Wide Web Technology Terms (Number of texts in parentheses)

World Wide Web (6)
Internet (6)
Online monitoring (4)
e-mail (3)
Internet service provider (2)
Spam (2)
Web design (2)
Disadvantages (2)
Intranet (2)
Web site (2)
Cyberspace (2)

What appears to be overlooked or marginally covered is the legal and ethical implications of Internet and World Wide Web technology. A few textbooks do broach these topics, although not in great detail. For example, Seitel (2001) presents information on the Communication Decency Act, registration of domain names, and access for disabled persons in a few short pages. Wilcox, Ault, and Agee (1998), and Wilcox, Ault, Agee, and Cameron (2000) mention copyright on the Internet. Baskin, Aronoff, and Lattimore (1997) briefly present copyright infringement and libel issues regarding the Internet. Seitel (2001) discusses some ethical issues surrounding Internet use, but not in much detail.

The assessment of the textbook tone indicates that authors consider the Internet and World Wide Web still to be "new" technologies. First, this was evident by titles of three technology chapters: "The Internet and Other New Technologies" (Wilcox, Ault, & Agee, 1998; Wilcox, Ault, Agee, & Cameron, 2000), and "New Communication Technology" (Guth & Marsh, 2000). Additionally, the information included on Internet technology is basic and often brief. For example, Wilcox, Ault, Agee, and Cameron (2000) address research uses of the Internet and World Wide Web in about three pages. Its glossary terms also reflect simplistic foundations, defining such words as "Internet," "e-mail," "hit," "online," and "Information Superhighway." However, the 6th edition text incorporates more information, Web links, and glossary terms than the 5th edition published in 1998.

The Cutlip, Center, and Broom text (2000), as noted earlier, does not incorporate an Internet or new technologies chapter. It does, however, address Internet and World Wide Web issues throughout the textbook, and presents this technology as an emerging resource for public relations practitioners. In the "New media, new challenges" section in the media relations chapter, for example, the Internet is described as "the most ubiquitous leading edge of what is a major communication revolution" (p. 285). The Internet is presented as both a research tool and a communication tactic tool in this text.

The 4th edition of Baskin, Aronoff, and Lattimore (1997) also does not include a chapter on the Internet, but includes emerging technologies throughout the textbook, most specifically in its corporate public relations chapter. Here, the Internet is identified as a "new" and "revolutionary" technology (p. 436). The authors indicate that public relations practitioners must develop Internet skills or they will be left behind.

The Guth and Marsh (2000) text includes several basic concepts within its "New Communication Technology" chapter, including Internet history, Web security, convergence, and the advantages and disadvantages of Internet and World Wide Web technology. Its glossary also defines "spam," "convergence," "Intranets," "Extranets," "newsgroups, "hypermedia," "virtual PR," and "Web site." Several cases and commentaries by public relations professionals incorporate technology themes, giving students some exposure to current practices involving the Internet and World Wide Web. The tone focuses on these technologies as new; however, the authors also acknowledge that technological changes are occurring rapidly: "By the time you finish reading this sentence," they state, "some of the technological advancements discussing in this chapter will be obsolete" (p. 342).

The Seitel (2001) and Newsom, Turk, and Kruckeberg (2000) textbooks present the Internet as an evolving technology, rather than strictly a new medium. Although the Seitel (2001) textbook billed itself as an Internet-focused book with technology topics, cases, and exercises integrated throughout the book, the tone still presented the Internet as the "new cyberinfluence" (p. xxi) in which "the wonders of the Web are still only evolving" (p. 300). In his discussion of research and the Web, Seitel noted that the Internet "is in its infancy" (p. 120).

Similarly, Newsom, Turk, and Kruckeberg (2000) did not include a separate Internet chapter, they said, because of the pervasiveness of the digital world. The discussion of high-tech topics is presented as a vast frontier, whose potential remains unrealized. However, it is one of the few textbooks that include headings for topics such as interactive audio and virtual reality.

Additionally, this textbook identifies many emerging topics in its glossary, which is the most extensive collection of technology terms of the eight texts assessed. Terms range from "disk" and "listserv" to "freenet," Quicktime," "usenet," and "videotext."

In summary, the majority of these textbooks present Internet and World Wide Web concepts to their readers, although only half of the books include dedicated Internet or new technology chapters. The information focuses primary on the Internet as a communication vehicle rather than a research vehicle, although both areas are addressed. The tone of the books identifies Internet technology as a new and emerging–sometimes revolutionary–resource for public relations practitioners.

Discussion of Results

Only portions of the proposed hypotheses were supported by this study. This section examines each hypothesis to determine whether the results support or refute these predictions.

Hypothesis 1, which posited that the public relations textbooks would include at least one chapter dedicated to Internet and World Wide Web technology, was only partly supported. Only four of the eight textbooks included topic-specific chapters. However, two textbooks indicate in their introductory remarks that they had purposefully excluded new technology chapters and instead incorporated Internet information throughout their textbooks.

As expected in Hypothesis 2, these textbooks focus more on the Internet as a communication tactic tool rather than as a research tool. The exceptions are the 5th and 6th editions of *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*. These two textbooks focus on the use of Internet tools to learn about publics, and scan and monitor viewpoints, which supports the widely accepted definition of public relations as a function to manage issues and understand public opinion.

Roughly 64 percent to 87 percent of the Web links presented in these eight textbooks were found to be in working order, which does not support the contention of Hypothesis 3 that links would be active. This flaw creates problems for readers who may wish to consult online materials or view the Web tool examples cited within the textbooks. This problem, however, does reinforce research findings about the frustration textbook users feel about the obsolescence of the course materials. Recommendations to deal with this inherent problem are made in the following section.

As anticipated in Hypothesis 4, the tone of these textbooks presents the Internet and World Wide Web as new opportunities for practitioners. Certainly, information within the textbooks indicates the tremendous growth of new communication technologies but also shows that their usage by public relations practitioners is still evolving. Authors do stress, however, that practitioners must keep abreast of technology issues in order to perform their jobs well.

Finally, Hypothesis 5, which stated that more pages would address Internet technology outside dedicated chapters more than within them, was partially supported. Five textbooks have extensive discussion of Internet technology in outside chapters, but two–Guth and Marsh (2000) and Wilcox, Ault, & Agee (1998)–include more pages within new technology chapters than outside those pages. The 1983 Baskin and Aronoff text did not address Internet technology at all.

Before proceeding with research implications and recommendations, it is important to acknowledge study limitations. Researchers did not speak directly with public relations instructors regarding their textbook usage for this study, but instead relied on Internet searches. As such, identifying what outside materials might be used to supplement textbooks was not explored. Additionally, only eight textbooks were examined, so it is difficult to make in-depth comparisons between textbooks for richer analysis or to draw conclusions about how Internet technology is covered in classes. However, this assessment of textbooks points to a number of issues that might be addressed in future studies and by textbook authors.

Implications of Research

The textbooks assessed for this study discuss the importance of the "new" Internet and World Wide Web technology, although the numerous challenges of addressing fast-changing, evolving technology is apparent. Information obsolescence is evident in the number of inactive Web links, and the presentation of rudimentary Internet concepts, such as e-mail and Web sites, as revolutionary. Similarly, textbooks provide limited discussion or Internet access to diverse viewpoints that might guide students to be critical thinkers.

Textbooks primarily present Internet and World Wide Web technology as a viable, albeit "new" technology for public relations practitioners to use. This is evident by half the textbooks' inclusion of communication technology chapters, and the incorporation of Web links and some case studies about Internet use throughout all but one textbook. In fact, it is interesting that more Web links are incorporated outside the technology chapters than within them. On the plus side, this finding suggests that authors recognize the importance of Web links to provide additional information about all aspects of public relations and not just technology-specific issues. The limited inclusion of Web links suggests that authors have yet to fully embrace how technology has and continues to have an impact on the public relations industry.

Including Web links within textbooks is something of a double-edged sword, however. Authors including links in their textbooks should use caution and consider the dynamic nature of the Web. Based on the findings in this study, 13 percent to 36 percent of the textbooks' Web links are either inactive or connected to pages not relevant to the URL. On the plus side, however, some links prompt users to updated links or redirect them to the updated pages. To help solve the problem of defunct links and perhaps authors' hesitation to include links because of their fleeting nature, authors should consider using homepage links instead of targeted URLs. Although the specific location or Web address may change, the information typically remains on a Web site and can be obtained by conducting a search or consulting the site map. For example, a news release distributed via PRNewswire six months ago might be accessed via an archival search of the company's homepage, prnewswire.com. Thus, authors can direct students to broader links with instructions on how to dig deeper into these sites to find relevant detail. Additionally, Web publishers should consider Web link effectiveness. When feasible, organizations should redirect users from out-of-date Web sites to the more current links.

As authors discuss within the pages of these books, one of the most beneficial features of the World Wide Web is the absence of physical boundaries, allowing access to virtually unlimited amounts of information. Some authors, such as Guth and Marsh (2000), Seitel (2001), and Cutlip, Center, and Broom (2000) utilized their textbooks' Web links to provide additional information for students and teachers. These links included student study guides, instructor support information, and even downloadable video clips relevant to specific chapters. Perhaps the most exemplary use of Internet technology was by Wilcox, Ault, Agee, and Cameron (2000), 6th edition. Its Web link includes a chat room and message board to permit readers throughout the country to communicate with one another. Certainly, this reflects the spirit of communication without borders. Such features allow students to discuss timely topics online, even though the textbook itself is two years old.

Although most of the textbook Web sites include a copyright signature, it appears that few of the sites have added information since the associated textbook's publication. It seems that publishers may be missing an opportunity to rejuvenate the life of their textbooks with occasional site updates. Although it would not be feasible for publishers to add or modify information frequently like online news organizations, it may be worthwhile for publishers and textbook authors to incorporate relevant and perhaps even cutting-edge public relations information from time to time.

One of the most challenging findings was the emphasis on terms instead of practical application of Internet technology. Missing from these texts were many examples of how technologies such as streaming and downloadable video and audio or online press releases services are being used by public relations practitioners. One does not have to look far to see that public relations practitioners frequently use these relatively new online tools. Instead of examining these technologies within a public relations context, the texts primarily focused on background terms such as gopher, TCP/IP, ASCII, and FTP. Although these terms and their related applications are helpful in understanding the history and workings of the Internet and World Wide Web, they do not provide students with practical applications or theoretical implications of the effect communication technologies have on the public relations industry.

For example, these textbooks provided little information that guides students in *how* to use the Internet and World Wide Web as research tools. Terms such as online monitoring and database were defined, but strategies for effectively using search engines, news groups, listservs, or Web sites to track trends, identify publics, or conduct secondary and primary research, are weak or nonexistent.

Similarly, these texts provide very slim detail about the legal and ethical ramifications of the Internet and World Wide Web. Four textbooks mention topics such as Internet copyright, libel on the Internet, obscenity regulation, and registration of domain names, but do not provide much detail about the implications for public relations practice. For example, practitioners often are responsible for monitoring public perceptions of their organizations. Although a few texts included examples of negative sentiments (e.g., walmartsucks.com), they did not address the legal implications of these sites, including libel or trademark issues. Additionally, issues such as the rights of individuals who post messages on newsgroups anonymously are not addressed. Students should at least be exposed to some pertinent cyberspace law issues and understand the implications for public relations.

There was very little evidence that textbooks incorporate the different perspectives that the Internet and World Wide Web can offer by including links to these diverse voices. Because texts have limited space, most often, only the author's voice is represented. By providing links to diverse sources, authors may allow different viewpoints to be heard. Further, active links to Web sites are windows of opportunity to explore topics that otherwise might be excluded because of the physical limitations of printed textbooks.

Public relations professionals have been using Internet and World Wide Web technology to conduct research and create communication tools for many years now. Hence, it is time for textbooks to acknowledge that this technology, while still growing, is no longer new. Textbook authors have an opportunity to provide students with virtually unlimited supplemental information, a diversity of voices on topics they present in their books, and how-to instruction for using these technologies for research and communication. By discussing these practices, publishers and authors can reflect the standard practices employed by public relations professionals.

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Crisis public relations: A study of leadership, culture, demand and delivery

by

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ABSTRACT:

This study explored how public relations practitioners and their respective managers responded to the crisis events of September 2001. In depth interviews were conducted with five communicators and five managers in an effort to understand how organizational leadership, culture and the demand and delivery of crisis public relations affected the overall response of their organizations to the 9/11 attacks. The study provides the first insights, beyond the Excellence Study, of the demand-delivery cycle as proposed by Dozier, Grunig & Grunig.

INTRODUCTION

It was an almost unbelievable and incomprehensible textbook example of a crisis: an unpredictable, major threat that has had a negative effect on organizations, industry and the public (Coombs, 1999). From the moment that the first plane hit the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001 the world of crisis communication has taken center stage with news conferences, media briefings, employee meetings, toll-free hotlines, and websites. A state of panic swept the entire country, as reporters, government officials and instant experts tried to make sense of the events. As the crisis widened, some organizations turned to their crisis manuals, while others turned to intuition and instinct. Some organizations showed clear and deliberate leadership, while others struggled to find their way.

As the dust began to settle, the importance of communicating in this crisis hit a fevered pitch. It was as equally important for the nation to hear from the President as it was for the president of an investment company to hear from her employees. The country, the families, and the survivors of this horrific tragedy experienced a disruption that physically affected their basic assumptions and their subjective sense of self. The immediate effect of this crisis has, as Pauchant & Mitroff (1992) predicted, threatened the legitimacy of an industry, reversed the strategic missions of organizations, and disturbed the way people see the world and themselves.

Months from now, when the rubble and debris are cleared away and the organizations that were directly impacted by this crisis begin the process of rebuilding, researchers will begin to uncover the best and the worst of communicating in a crisis. According to Ulmer & Sellnow (2000), if handled effectively, organizations have the potential to benefit from crises. In fact, there are already indicators that the crisis communication approach taken by some organizations, like the City of New York, will be held out as models of excellent crisis public relations. And there will be those organizations that failed to respond to their employees, their families, their customers in a manner that engendered trust and confidence. The survival of those organizations will be in jeopardy.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

While the terrorist attacks of September 2001 stand alone in terms of the devastating impact it has had on individual businesses and the economy, it is a reminder for all organizations that: *credo quai impossible* – it is certain because it is impossible (Marra, 1997). Just think about recent news stories that have dominated our water cooler conversations: terrorist attacks, workplace violence, school bus accidents, construction fatalities, financial embezzlement, the list is almost endless. From Ford's finger pointing at Bridgestone to the Walkerton water crisis to Britain's hoof and mouth outbreaks, our daily newspapers and newscasts constantly report stories of mismanagement, malfunction, death and destruction.

Crisis events have a dramatic impact on an organization's ability to survive. And yet, as Penrose (2000) identified, about 40 per cent of Fortune 1000 industrial companies do not have an operational crisis plan and fully 80 per cent of companies without a comprehensive crisis plan vanish within two years of suffering a major disaster. So why is it that some organizations are capable of effectively limiting reputational damage during crisis events? Is it because they have good luck or is it because wise organizations know that crises will befall them; they just do not know when (Coomb, 1999).

The purpose of this study is to determine what, if any, changes to the role and perception of crisis public relations in organizations occurred in the aftermath of the World Trade Center crisis. Furthermore, I examined the role of leadership in both crisis preparedness and crisis management and the extent to which excellent organizations are lead by excellent leaders. Finally, the study seeks to understand the level of demand for increased crisis preparedness in light of the World Trade Center crisis by the organizations studied.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A critical review of crisis management and crisis communication literature over the last 20 years produces a great deal of instruction but little in the way of explanation or prediction. As such, there has been relatively little crisis public relations theory building despite the fact that organizations face crises everyday. The field of crisis communication management is deep in anecdotes and prescriptive models but rather shallow in theory development. Some researchers have had limited success looking to situational theory, organizational theory, systems theory, chaos theory, and the excellence theory of public relations to help explain why and how organizations respond during crisis events.

Marra (1997) stated "many conventional and accepted public relations tactics do not contribute to managing crises well. The current mindset of crisis public relations needs to be replaced with one that allows managers to practice excellent public relations (p.2)." As a student of J.E. Grunig at the University of Maryland, Marra positions his theory within the excellence theory of public relations. "Although the Excellence study did not specifically address crisis public relations, much of its literature review and findings are applicable to developing theory in crisis public relations" (p.20). To be excellent, Marra believes that crisis public relations must be strategic, have a two-way symmetrical focus, have the authority and autonomy to act quickly and that the senior public relations practitioner must be a member of the dominant coalition and report directly to the Chief Executive Officer (Marra, 1997).

Crisis Communication

A crisis according to Heath (1997) is an untimely event that can be anticipated, that may prevent management from accomplishing its efforts to create the understanding and satisfaction between the organization and interested parties needed to negotiate the mutually beneficial exchange of stakes. If unattended or poorly managed, the crisis can prevent the organization from making satisfactory progress toward achieving its mission. According to Williams and Olaniran (1994) crises vary in degree and probability but all share the threat of causing damage to companies which can be measured in terms of harm to the corporate image and actual financial losses. Furthermore, a crisis threatens the physical system of an organization (Pauchant & Mitroff, 1992).

Organizational crises are low-probability, high-impact events that threaten the viability of the organization and are characterized by ambiguity of cause, effect, and means of resolution, as well as by a belief that decisions must be made swiftly (Pearson, 1998). Burnett (1994) states that crises provide myriad-learning opportunities for the organization. For example: How well do we adapt to unexpected threats? What changes, if any, in organization structure and policies would enhance our sensitivity and responsiveness to crisis situations?

Communication according to Burning & Ledingham (2000) is a vehicle that organizations should use to initiate, develop, maintain and repair mutually productive organization-public relationships. Therefore when taken together, crisis communication is best defined as the verbal, visual, and/or written interaction between the organization and its publics (often through the news media) prior to, during, and after the negative occurrence. The communications are designed to minimize damage to the image of the organization (Fearn-Banks, 1996; Fearn-Banks, 2001).

An organization's crisis communication mindset is described by Pauchant & Mitroff (1992) as one in which the perceptions of senior executives determine cultural beliefs in the organization about the value and need for crisis management. Pearson (1998) states that organizational crisis preparedness starts with executive perceptions about risk and risk-taking. The most lucid explanation of the crisis mindset is best delivered by Habermas (1975) who clearly and concisely stated that, "the crisis cannot be separated from the viewpoint of the one who is undergoing it (p. 58).

In order to incorporate crisis communication into a more strategic framework, a number of researchers categorize this function as crisis management. Pearson & Clair (1998) define it as the systematic attempt to avoid organizational crises or to manage those crises that do occur. To achieve that condition, organizations implement a crisis management plan, which consists of a full range of thoughtful processes and steps that anticipate the complex nature of crises (Caywood & Stocker, 1993). Included in those steps would be the designation of a crisis team, communication processes, stakeholder assessments, media relations initiatives, and post-crisis evaluations.

Organizational Culture

Culture is ubiquitous. It defines who we are as individuals as much as it defines who we are as organizations, teams, and groups. For organizations, culture refers to the core values that all employees share. According to Barney (1986), culture consists of a complex set of shared ideologies, symbols, and values that influence the way an organization conducts its business.

The culture of an organization will effectively determine how successful it is in managing crisis events. Whether authoritarian or participatory, the culture is the eyes, ears, and soul of the organization as it anticipates and responds to crisis events. From its senior management team up through the ranks of the women and men who keep the organization afloat, successful organizations empower their employees with a culture of anticipation, response, enactment and adaptation, in order to successfully steer through difficult and complex crisis events.

The foundation for a successful culture is the organization's communication system. A more participatory culture will develop and foster a more symmetrical style of communication, and "provides the most nurturing environment" (Sriramesh, Grunig, & Dozier, 1996, p. 257) for building symmetrical relationships with its key publics. An authoritarian culture will most likely produce a uni-directional communication perspective (Sriramesh, Grunig, & Buffington, 1992; Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995; Grunig, 2001). Furthermore, given that the organization's communication systems, while determined by the dominant coalition, is the responsibility of the public relations department, it is reasonable to conclude that the articulation of the culture during a crisis is dependent on the organization's vision, leadership and demand for and delivery of excellent crisis public relations.

According to Newsom, Turk, & Kruckberg (2001), "all organizations function along a spectrum of open to closed communication. One of the most striking features of organizational culture is the prevailing communication system. The more closed a system is, the more likely it is that communication is top-down and that the system takes a management-by-objectives approach. The more open a system is, the more participative it is and the more likely that it is aligned with total quality management principles" (p.651).

The tragic irony of today's crisis management reality is that most of the organizations that have been cited as failing to respond effectively to severe and catastrophic threats, Firestone, Coca Cola, Union Carbide, and Exxon, would pride themselves on the strategic nature of their businesses. As marketing-driven organizations, they focus their strategic efforts on understanding the marketplace opportunities and planning for competitive challenges to their brands and products. The problem however is that these types of organizations are traditionally bureaucratic, hierarchical, inflexible, and slow to respond to new information. According to Warren Bennis, a leading management and leadership scholar, "when organizations start to atrophy and bureaucratic sluggishness sets in, it's almost always because they forgot what it was that's important about the work, what is the meaning of it? It seems to me that when you look at people getting into a habit again, it is because habit and success together deaden" (Bernhut, 2001, p.39).

Much like the crisis mindset of the organization, the research strongly points to the corporate culture within the organization as a key determinant of success. According to Hill & Jones (2001), success is measured as the attainment of organizational goals. Corporate culture refers to the core values shared by all or most employees. It consists of a complex set of shared ideologies, symbols, and values that influence the way the firm conducts its business. Corporate culture is the social energy that drives or fails the organization (Barney, 1986). The normative strategy literature suggests that effective organizations have adaptive organizational cultures that require scanning of the external environment so that managers may mediate between the external environment and the organization to bring about fit between strategy, structure, and external constraints (D'Aveni & McMillian, 1990). This type of culture is especially important for those organizations that operate within an unstable or highly dynamic environment – crisis prone industries. According to Valle (1999) "adaptive organizational cultures not only succeed in crisis environments, but excel" (p.248). An unstable organizational environment requires a different organizational structure to constantly adjust to the ongoing challenges of the marketplace. As Smallman & Weir (1999) suggest:

> "There is a very definite need for a different style of management in an increasingly chaotic business world. This requires a move away from the dominant reactive model to a more proactive, holistic approach. The proactive style is typified by a much broader approach that requires organizations to recognize and attenuate factors that may combine to increase the likelihood of a risk developing into a hazardous event" (p. 33).

Those organizations that develop an open, participatory culture are better positioned to anticipate and respond to organizational crises because information about possible threats move fluidly from all parts of the organization to the key decision makers. While this type of culture is more prevalent and easier to create in smaller, more entrepreneurial style companies, Valle (1999) believes that all organizations are capable of achieving this state: "the primary means by which leaders facilitate the successful resolution of organizational tasks in turbulent environments is to build a culture with a core competence which values and excels at adaptation – organizations that are flexible" (p. 246).

This flexibility enables all parts of the organization to continuously scan the external and internal environments, thereby providing decision makers with relevant information to understand the challenges and make the necessary corrective or proactive decisions to avert the crisis. This two-way flow of communication, up and down the organization, provides decision makers with a higher degree of comfort that all potential threats are on the organization's radar screen and noticed by everyone. Smallman & Weir (1999) believe that it is important that organizations pay attention to "weak" signals that could be indicators of potential latent failures, which could lead to crisis if left unexamined. Among the most commonly observed failure behaviors are not listening, not offering feedback, not asking open-ended questions, restricting the universe of information by neglecting undervalued sources of information, such as that of "junior" staff – or in the case of organizations, "lower participants" (p. 39).

As Marra (1997) stated, the mindset necessary to successfully mitigate and avert organizational crises must be strategic and positioned throughout the organization, in an open culture where all levels of the organization have a voice to alert of potential threats.

Leadership

Since the beginning of time, researchers and social scientist have been interested in leaders (Bass, 1990). Research studies have physically examined leaders from head to toe (usually from a distance or after death), they have dissected their entire behavioral system to determine which traits are most representative of successful (and not so successful) leaders, and finally they have attempted to predict which leaders work best in certain predicaments and what conditions are best for certain leaders. Let's just say that it is a subject that has been thoroughly explicated (save and accept for crisis leadership).

Leaders have led us into battle, have led us across the desert, have led us to great inventions and have led us to great success. Why is it then that leadership is the key to crisis preparedness? "Leadership is about coping with change, setting a direction, aligning people, motivating and inspiring, keeping people moving in the right direction, despite major obstacles to change, by appealing to basic but often untapped human needs, values, and emotions" (Kotter, 1999, p. 18).

According to the leading researchers, leadership is the single most critical factor in an organization's success or failure, especially in times of crisis when leaders provide vision and direction and create order out of chaos (Bass, 1999; Grunig, 1992). For Byrd (1987) crises are about uncertainty and fear; leadership is about anticipation, vision, flexibility and empowerment. It seems like a perfect fit.

However, there are of course good leaders and bad leaders – it just depends on how you measure their success, and on the side you are on. If you believe that a hierarchical, bureaucratic organizational system is effective, then your leader will most typically be a task-focused, command and control style leader. Military leaders, bankers, and accountants, and engineers seem to dominate these types of organizations. For those that have been successful, their role model would be Winston Churchill – the British prime minister who led his country against Nazi Germany a half century ago. In a speech about Dunkirk given in British House of Commons on June 4, 1940, Churchill said, "we shall fight on the beaches. We shall fight on the landing grounds. We shall fight in the fields, and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender!"

The leadership theorists would debate whether this command and control style is true leadership or more managerial in its approach (Kotter, 1999, Berson, Shamir, Avolio & Popper, 2001). According to Conger and Kanungo (1998), leaders establish the vision and the plan, while managers work the details. This is an important distinction that is critical to the crisis preparedness field. The vast majority of the crisis research focuses on the "management" side of the table: what happens when the crisis hits, who is responsible, when do we start to repair our image, and how long should it take. These are all relevant and important questions, but certainly not questions that would inspire an organization to focus on crisis prevention and preparedness.

The question, managerial vs. leadership, has been debated in the academic and professional journals as a choice between those that support and promote "transactional" leadership and those that prefer "transformational" leadership. According to Bass (1990), transactional leaders provide instructions, clarifications, and expectations to their followers providing rewards for the followers' efforts and performance. Alternatively, "transformational" leadership includes idealized influence (also known as charisma), inspirational motivation and individualized consideration to achieve follower job performance satisfaction (Pillai, Schriesheim, & Williams 1999). According to Valle (1999), "when transformational/charismatic leadership is directed toward the accomplishment of organizational goals and to the benefit of the organization, increases in productivity, performance, and satisfaction will be the result" (p.248).

Furthermore, an important determinant of charismatic leadership is the presence of a crisis situation. It was in fact, sociologist Max Weber (1947) who first developed the theory of charismatic leadership, outlining five interacting elements essential to producing charisma:

- An extraordinary gifted person;
- A social crisis or situation of desperation;
- A set of ideas providing a radical solution to the crisis;
- A set of followers who are attracted to the exceptional person and who come to believe that he or she is directly linked to the transcendent powers; and
- The validation of that person's extraordinary gifts and transcendence by repeated successes (Hunt, Boal, & Dodge, 1999, p. 424).

According to House (1999), one of the leading charismatic leadership theorists, "whether radical vision and a crisis are necessary conditions for the emergence and effectiveness of organizational charismatic leaders is an empirical question yet to be answered. It is clear, however, that some form of severe threat or stress experienced by followers facilitates the emergence and effectiveness of these leaderS" (p. 564). It is during crises however, that true charismatic leaders shine. If it is true that leaders without followers are not leaders, then leader during times of crisis lead because people in crisis seek proxy control – they want to be led (Pillai & Meindl, 1998). As Jackson & Dutton (1988) point out it is due to the ability of the charismatic leader to provide a real, or perceived, visionary solution to a crisis that results in increased motivation, raised performance levels and a means of coping with the event. An experimental study conducted by Hunt et al. (1999) suggests that a crisis event does play a significant role in the development of charisma. If leaders respond to crisis, they will be perceived to be as charismatic and visionary leaders. Crisis alone does not create charisma but crisis and a leaders' response do create charismatic leaders.

So what is it about these charismatic leaders that suggest they are the critical element of our concept? According to House & Aditya (1997), charismatic leaders have:

- The ability to lead organizations to attain outstanding accomplishments;
- The ability to achieve extraordinary levels of follower motivation, admiration, respect, trust, commitment, dedication, loyalty, and performance;
- The ability to stress symbolic and emotionally appealing leader behavior such as vision, framing, image building, and environmental sensitivity; and,
- The ability to effect self-esteem, motive arousal and emotions, and identification with the leader's vision and values (p. 419).

To strengthen these attributes, House & Aditya (1997) pointed to a litany of research on charismatic leadership that support these characteristics, especially under conditions of crisis and uncertainty (p.419 – 420).

The Demand and Delivery of Crisis Public Relations

According to Grunig (1992), excellent organizations demand excellent public relations through the use of two-way symmetrical and two-way asymmetrical practices. This demand, which was first illustrated in the Excellence Study, is also a critical element in the successful management of crises. "CEO's and communicators mentioned crises again and again as catalysts for changes in management's view of communication: the Bhopal tragedy, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the oil embargo of the 1970s, and activist opposition to nuclear power plants are examples. These events served as wake-up calls to senior managers who previously placed little importance on public relations and communications management" (Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995, p. 103).

Dozier et al. (1995) proposed that in organizations, where public relations practitioners are managers, contribute to strategic decision making and implement two-way communications programs, the dominant coalition will demand excellent communication programs from the public relations department. In return, the department's communicators will scan the organization's external environment for potential threats and opportunities, provide strategic advice to the dominant coalition before decisions are finalized, and "design programs and craft messages to effectively communicate in a fashion that achieves the dominant coalition's desired outcomes among targeted publics" (p.15). This then establishes an ongoing behavior cycle between the management of the organization and the public relations department: demand for excellent public relations by the dominant coalition and delivery of excellent programs by the public relations department.

The key for Dozier et al. (1995) was that the public relations practitioners must have the access to the dominant coalition, either formally or informally, have the ability to provide strategic advice and counsel, and finally must be and be seen to be, part of the overall management of the organization – have "formal decision-making authority for communication policy within the organization" (p. 74).

This cycle of behavior becomes more apparent for those organizations that experience crises. According to Dozier et al. (1995), "CEOs and communicators mentioned crises again and again as catalysts for changes in management's views of communication; the Bhopal tragedy, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the oil embargo of the 1970's, and activist opposition to nuclear power plants are examples. These events served as wake-up calls to senior managers who previously placed little importance on public relations and communication management" (p. 103).

But does it always take a crisis to demonstrate the value of public relations? Unfortunately there is little research to indicate which comes first, the demand or the delivery. It is obvious that there must be a need and an expertise in order to create the opportunity for this cyclical behavior to exist. One without the other and the demand-delivery loop will not exist; there is abundant examples of organizations that have had public relations departments that had the ability to deliver excellent communication programs but didn't have the access to senior management or authority to implement such programs. Conversely, there are also examples of organizations that required strategic public relations counsel and advice but had failed to develop that necessary, functional expertise within the organization.

While the literature on crisis public relations is rich in applied research and prescriptive in how to develop management systems, there is an obvious void in identifying and explaining the antecedents of effective organizational crisis response. Marra (1997) and Penrose (2000) pointed to a "mindset" and "perceptions" but failed to fully explicate and define the conditions that would enable an organization to ready itself for anticipated crisis events. For the purposes of this study, three key conditions are explored as a means of exploring the value of crisis public relations in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks: the perceptions of crisis public relations; defining crisis leadership and its role in preparing an organization for a crisis; and, the level of demand and delivery for crisis public relations.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Given that successful crisis communication is dependent on an organization's ability to anticipate and ready itself for crisis events, I believe that in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the demand for increased crisis preparedness would fall on the public relations department. My rationale comes from Penrose (2000) who found that the perception of a crisis as a threat increased an organization's willingness to engage in planning activities. Furthermore, those organizations that practice excellent public relations display the key variables of excellent public relations: a strategic focus, a strong organizational culture and leadership, a public relations department that has authority and autonomy, and an ongoing demand for and delivery of excellent public relations.

The research questions (RQs) posed for this study are:

RQ1: How has the dominant coalition's perception of crisis public relations changed since the 9/11 attacks?

Pearson and Clair (1998) showed that executive perceptions are the fundamental and initiating variable in determining potential outcomes from a crisis. Organizations that have engaged in excellent public relations can build mutually beneficial relationships with their key publics prior to the onset of a crisis. Furthermore, they should strategically anticipate the potential impact that potential crises could have on the overall functioning of their organizations. That includes the ability to monitor the external environment, anticipate issues that affect the ongoing operations of the organization, and finally develop programs and plans to minimize the impact that a crisis will have on their credibility and reputation. Therefore the practice of excellent public relations should lead to the practice of excellent crisis public relations.

RQ2: How do organizations define crisis leadership and what affect does it have on crisis preparedness?

According to Penrose (2000), the success of crisis management programs rests with the senior management's willingness to engage in proactive planning initiatives. Furthermore, Pearson and Clair (1998) showed that executive perceptions are the fundamental and initiating variable in determining potential outcomes from a crisis. As Mitroff (2001) wrote, the best form of crisis leadership is to increase one's crisis preparedness. This high-level function, which resides in the executive suites, must have mechanisms and structures to prepare the organization for potential crises. Therefore, the increased crisis preparedness of the organization should be directly tied to the level of senior management leadership as the organization prepares for a crisis.

RQ3 How has the demand for crisis public relations by the dominant coalition changed following the 9/11 attacks?

The demand-delivery concept of public relations was first proposed by Dozier, Grunig & Grunig (1995) as a means of understanding the connection between senior management (or as they call it, the dominant coalition) and the public relations department. "The demand-delivery linkage describes an ongoing relationship between communicators and the dominant coalition. When the dominant coalition expect communicators to think strategically to solve a problem or conflict with a key public, that reinforces the knowledge or expertise in the communication department to deliver communication excellence" (p.16). While the concept of demand and delivery may appear to be a logical extension of organizational supply and demand concepts, its importance to the field of public relations research has never been assessed.

METHOD

A qualitative research design, which received Institutional Review Board approval, was employed in order to examine, in great detail, a small sample of participants' observations on crisis public relations (Broom & Dozier, 1990). According to Broom & Dozier, "a depth interview is an open-ended interview in which an individual is encouraged to discuss an issue, problem or question in his or her own terms." (p. 145). This approach is appropriate for research that is exploratory and descriptive in nature (Yin, 1994). Often qualitative research leads to new ideas and theories by being "up close to the social world (Pettigrew, 1996, p.62). Given that there has been relatively little theory building in crisis public relations, a qualitative research approach is appropriate to establish variables that can be used to develop generalizable principles of crisis public relations.

Purposive sampling was used to identify professional public relations practitioners enrolled in executive, masters-level public relations program, at a northeastern university, who are most likely to provide the depth of information needed to answer the questions under study (Van Dyke, 2001).

The profile of a typical student in this program is a college graduate holding a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university in liberal arts, mass communications, or public relations. They are experienced professional in public relations or a related field whose current position and/or career advancement plans require expanded knowledge and experience in counseling and decision-making processes; a firmer grasp of management and finance; a global perspective; strategic planning; and leadership.

The research questions were investigated through in-depth, telephone interviews with five communicators and five managers from their respective. The type of sampling used was a combination of snowball and dimensional. Snowballing, or asking the initial five interviewees to suggest other interviewees, served to expand the list of participants from the original list (drawn from a list of communicators) to the final 10 (Hon, 1998). The purpose of using both communicators and managers was to determine whether there was variance between the perceptions of those who were on the frontlines of crisis communication and those that had broader managerial responsibilities in the organization. Furthermore, the five communicators had considerable knowledge of the theoretical framework of public relations through their studies in the executive master's program, therefore the responses of the five managers provided an opportunity to assess further understand and evaluate the organization's leadership, preparedness and demand for crisis public relations. A mix of senior-level and mid-career public relations practitioners as well as mid-level and senior managers were interviewed.

Through the use of semi-structured interviews and analysis of responses (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982), insights on crisis leadership, organizational culture, and the demand for crisis public relations, was gathered as a means of contributing to an area of public relations research that has not been explored in-depth. The 10 interviews were conducted by telephone and, with permission from the participant, were tape-recorded. The interviews lasted anywhere from 35 minutes to 1 hour after which the audiotapes were transcribed verbatim. Furthermore, a series of case notes was kept for each participant, which enabled me to add any observations, both non-verbal and verbal, that added to the depth and understanding of the responses. Due to time constraints, follow-up interviews were not conducted with the participants.

Procedure

The data collected for this research project was analyzed using pattern-matching techniques as identified by Yin (1994). The findings were synthesized with the dual purpose of revealing common themes or trends and uncovering the range of response to what extend practitioners' and other managers' experiences and examples diverge (Hon, 1998).

Patterns of information that emerge from the data collected were examined in an effort to make generalizations about the role crisis leadership, the demand-delivery cycle of public relations and the crisis preparedness of an organization.

The design of the interview instrument sought to identify variables that might effect the functioning and effectiveness of organizations during crisis public relations events. Identification of specific interview questions was based on a review of recent literature on crisis management and organizational leadership. A combination of open-ended questions was constructed consistent with qualitative social science protocols for focused/semi-structured interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994, Flick, 1998, Santos, 2000).

RESULTS

The five communicators were familiar with the language and concepts discussed throughout the interview. As a matter of course, they often referred to their organization's senior management team as their "dominant coalition" and would often describe their involvement as "strategic counselors, boundary spanners, managers, and as the eyes and ears of the organization." The majority of the organizations they represented were large, for-profit corporations (an international accounting firm based in New York City, a global pulp and paper manufacturer headquartered on the eastern seaboard, a regional financial institution situated in Maryland, and an international nutrition company based in Ohio) with the remaining organization was a faith-based, academic institution located in the metro D.C area.

Each of the participants is a mid-career professional with between 10 to15 years of public relations experience. Two of the participants have worked for the same organization for more than 10 years while the three remaining participants have worked for their organizations for less than three years. None of the participants report directly to the most senior leader of the organization (Chair, Chief Executive Officer, President or

Division Senior Vice President) although two of communicators have a "dotted" line reporting structure when needed by their respective presidents, usually during crisis events.

Three of the participants are located within the same building as their most senior leader. The remaining participants were located at a manufacturing facility and a research and development laboratory, away from their corporate headquarters. Both of these individuals have limited contact with the senior management of the organization. As one communicator commented: "I have shaken hands with the boss of the boss of my boss!"

None of the organizations that participated in this research were directly involved in the 9/11 attacks, although one organization is located within blocks of the World Trade Center and two are located 40 minutes north of the Pentagon. These three communicators were however deeply involved in their organization's response to the 9/11 attacks and subsequent anthrax scares. More specifically, they were involved with the development and ongoing implementation of their organization's strategic communication response to the crisis. While their primary focus was on internal audiences (employees, faculty and students), their boundary-spanning expertise enabled them to make recommendations on other key stakeholders that were deemed important during the ongoing crisis response.

The two remaining communicators were only involved in responding to local employee concerns as a follow-up to the communication strategies employed by their respective headquarters' communications departments. While one communicator was involved in developing a "proposed" communication plan, she and her boss were unsuccessful in getting their divisional dominant coalition to see the value and importance in implementing the plan. As she said, "we are a division of a large multinational pharmaceutical company and our leadership was conditioned to wait until they heard something from head-office."

The manufacturing site communicator assisted with posting information for those employees that didn't have access to internal e-mail systems and made available television sets to production employees who wanted to watch the ongoing news coverage of the attacks. He said, "it was a time when we let the events unfold as they did and gave the employees access to the television coverage like never before. While we didn't shut down the production line, we did give them the leeway to watch the coverage and accomplish their jobs at the same time."

The 9/11 attacks impacted all communicators much the same as it impacted the rest of the country and the world. Each participant had a heightened level of concern, while those closer to New York City and D.C. were more profoundly affected by the tragedy. One participant stated, "we didn't know what was happening. It happened so suddenly and so dramatically. All we could do was catch our breath and begin to rally the troops. It was a time for real leadership within our organization."

Their respective managers have had a wide range of experience and expertise. The executive vice president of the financial institution has been with the organization for nearly 20 years, while the director of communication for the paper manufacturer and the director of the nutritional company have been with their companies for little more than one year. The remaining managers (accounting firm and university) have been with their organizations 6 and 10 years respectively.

All managers have been involved in many crises, both in their current positions and at previous employers. One manager worked for a Texas-based grocery chain and had assisted that company through a class action, discrimination lawsuit. Another worked for an international food agency in Europe and experienced a number of crisis events while distributing food supplies to developing countries. Yet another manager was instrumental in managing and responding to a number of incidents at his organization including a fatal shooting, a meningitis outbreak and a citywide environmental disaster.

It is a testament to the communicators' voices within their organizations that they were able to encourage these managers to participate in a lengthy discussion on the role of crisis communication and public relations with the researcher. All participants were given the opportunity to end the interview at any time and yet all completed the discussion and offered a great number of insights and reflections on how their organization responded to the events of September 11th and the last 100 days.

During the course of the interviews it became apparent that there was differing points of reflection between the managers who were involved in developing and implementing the dominant coalition's response to the 9/11 attacks and those communicators were either at distant locations or not consulted in designing the communication strategies. Those that were "at the table" had a heightened sense of accomplishment and involvement, while those that were "not involved" were just going through the motions. In some respects, it was a matter of proximity and local responsibility. While in the case of the nutrition company, both the communicator and the manager expressed a great sense of disappointment in their senior management's lack of response to the crisis; this they say was a "function of being the step-child of a bigger multi-national whose head office was located 5 hours away. Our culture is one of 'wait and see' and 'don't think outside of the box' and as such, it took our management 2 weeks before they sent any information to our employees."

For each participant, the events of 9/11 were unpredictable and as such, none of their organizations had anticipated this type of crisis event. As one manager said: "we have a play book with 15 or 16 different emergencies but we didn't anticipate a terrorist attack on New York City that would cripple the city and destroy the telecommunication system. No one could have anticipated the tragedy and the devastation that 9/11 caused, but cool heads prevailed and we just began to implement the plan." Now new terminology is being used to describe their efforts to prepare: Homeland Security Crisis Team, Terrorism Taskforce, National Disaster Response Team, and the list goes on.

Findings

RQ1: How has the dominant coalition's perception of crisis public relations changed since the 9/11 attacks?

For the majority of the participants, four out of the five organizations, public relations is seen as a vital, positive force within the organizations. The public relations practitioners are, for the most part, at the table when decisions are made during times of crisis. As one manager, who reports directly to the president of her organization said, "we take public relations very seriously and rely on the department to be proactive in preparing our organization for potential crises." Another manager said that their senior public relations practitioner is a "valued member of the senior executive group" and while not reporting directly to the chief executive officer of the firm, "has a dotted line responsibility in the event of a crisis, right to the Chairman and CEO." Still another describes this same relationship while adding that their senior vice president of public affairs "is an integral part of the chairman's team and also manages the CEO's office" but reports to an executive vice president of the company.

One manager indicated that, "it depends on who you talk to within our senior management team. The view of our senior public relations director is very positive in terms of his work and very positive in terms of all his contributions but it is limited or constrained by their understanding of his role. They don't understand what public relations is." He went on however to say, that for those whose opinions truly counted in a crisis, "the president, myself and a handful of the other senior managers, we know that he is our 'go-to-guy' in the event of a crisis." The organization's communicator recognized the contrasting viewpoints stating that after 10 years he is only now being recognized for his ability to develop strategic communication responses for the institution and not just newsletters, messages and dealing with media.

The outlier in this research study was the nutritional company that viewed public relations only in terms of the publicity and awareness that it could create for new products or events that the organization sponsored. The participants from that organization indicated that public relations was a second-tier function and that the senior managers viewed it as a "necessary evil."

Overall, the perception of the value of public relations was positively influenced by how the communicators responded to the crisis events. Several of the managers pointed to a number of immediate actions that the communicators took to communicate during the crisis. These actions included: providing strategic communication plans within

24 hours of the first attacks; being immediately available to gather the crisis team; advising the president and senior management team on what steps the organization should take; establishing an ongoing series of e-mail communiqués from the CEO; and, having had the crisis plan in place and tested prior to the 9/11 attacks.

Each of the participants provided vivid details of how effective public relations was practiced in the aftermath of the crisis. Said one practitioner, whose Chairman was stuck in Brazil and was unable to get back to U.S. for nearly a week, "we have a broadcast voice-mail system in place where the Chairman or the CEO can communicate important information to our entire U.S. workforce. These are periodic and well scripted, two-minute speeches. On 9/11, our Chair sent a series of 4 or 5 broadcast voice mails, updating our entire staff on information about our employees, our work environment, and our clients. At one point, not knowing if any of our employees were killed during the crisis, he actually broke down and started to cry. I played that message to my wife, and told her proudly, that 'this is whom I work for.' It radically changed my desire and willingness to work for this company."

Others mentioned the unusual steps that their organizations took to get messages out to their workforces from their CEO's and Executive Vice Presidents. For those organizations that had anticipated the eventual need for this type of communication response, they were able to use e-mail or other internal broadcast vehicles within short order. One manager, who is responsible for her organization's entire communication function, said that she recommended that the Chair send out a series of e-mail messages detailing the information that they could confirm and then providing ongoing updates as the days went on. In addition, they also used these messages as a means of soliciting feedback and comments from employees on what type of outreach the company should do to help the victims of the attacks. The manager said, "we received more feedback than we anticipated. People were thanking us for keeping them informed, for expressing how we as an organization felt about these terrible tragedies. Our employees gave us some wonderful ideas on how we could collectively respond."

Then there is the nutrition company, whose manager and communicator actually developed an internal communication strategy that had a heavy emphasis on diversity issues because of the high ratio of 'middle-eastern' researchers and scientists that worked at their facility. According to the manager, "we both (she and the communicator) sat down and developed this plan and then took it to our divisional managers who summarily dismissed it as 'not our responsibility' and 'too negative'. So instead, our employees had to wait two weeks before they had any correspondence from either the divisional president or the parent company" As the communicator said, "we had all these feelings and didn't have any acknowledgement from the company that it was fine to feel as we did. The only correspondence I received was an email indicating that all air travel was cancelled but that if we had to attend meetings, then we had to either drive or take the train."

The consensus however is that the perception of crisis public relations has been positively influenced by the events of 9/11 and a number of subsequent crises over the last 100 days. As one communicator said, "while our external public relations machine didn't kick-in during 9/11, what has changed is our internal communication capabilities in times of crisis. It is now better, stronger and more appreciated and more effective than it ever would have been if that day didn't happen and that's significant." A manager at another organization echoed the change, "it caused us to look pretty carefully at how we deal with these kinds of things, and we continue to look at, for example, the Anthrax issue... it just makes it clearer to our senior managers that we have been presented with a whole new set of concerns that we must adapt to and try to anticipate."

In the end, these communicators and managers agree on the importance of quick, effective communications from the leadership of the organization in times of crisis. Those that were "at the table" were able to influence their organization's response and as a result increased their own value and credibility with the dominant coalition. While those that were not at the table, made a number of significant observations that could make their organizations more effective when communicating with offsite facilities or production plants.

RQ2: How do organizations define crisis leadership and what affect does it have on crisis preparedness?

As the literature indicates, organizations that have a more participatory culture and strong transformational leadership will fair better in times of crisis then those with authoritarian cultures and transactional leadership. One common theme that ran through most interviews was the ongoing cultural changes that were taking place within each organization. Three of the organizations were continuing to create new cultures as a result of corporate mergers or amalgamations. For these companies the process has been ongoing for a number of years and has included a shift in the overall leadership of the organization.

This is an important observation because crisis events can have a dramatic impact on the future culture of an organization. This point was reflected in the words of a number of communicators and managers who said that their organizations were now closer than they were before, that there was more team work employed during the crisis response, and that they have learned a lot about their organizations and each other.

Three of the organizations that self-described their culture as inclusive and participatory also were the most prepared for the crisis. While all organizations had crisis plans and crisis management teams, these three had deliberately reviewed, rewritten and tested their plans prior to 9/11. One of the remaining organizations, whose communications manager had only been with the company less than a year, indicated that her organization was experiencing a cultural transformation, moving from a bureaucratic and authoritarian to "something that is much more people focused." For this organization, the focus on communicating with their people during the crisis has had a profound impact, "from the emails that our chairman sent out we heard a great deal of concern about Anthrax. As a result we upgraded our crisis communication plan and our organization around these concerns. It really demonstrated to our employees that the chairman and the leadership of the company truly care."

A series of questions were asked of the participants as a means of defining "crisis leadership" a concept that has yet to be fully defined in the crisis public relations literature. For some of the participants, crisis leadership is "being responsive, anticipating," "is the ability to protect and preserve and potentially enhance your reputation under volatile condition," "is being in control and meeting the needs of your stakeholders." One of the most articulate responses came from a communicator that has weathered a number of crisis over the last two years: "crisis leadership is the ability to take decisive action with sometimes limited information while relying on past experience and intuition and skillfully blending managerial decision making with communications expertise and crisis logistics."

Others participants described a series of traits that a leader should have and display during crisis. These included: compassion, conviction, decisiveness, calmness, and the ability to rally the troops around a common cause.

Conversely, all participants were quick with suggestions of what crisis leadership is not: "telling people what they need to know;" "temporary or happenstance;" "segmented or isolated;" "discounting people's fears and concerns;" "increasing the amount of stress within the organization;" "ignoring stakeholders and ducking for cover or waiting for someone to explain it away."

The overwhelming majority pointed to Rudy Giuliani as the best example of crisis leadership for the following reasons: "he was front and center, informative, calm, strong, and displayed that he was in charge." One communicator described Giuliani's leadership as "clearly in charge. He had smart people around him. He did not try and forecast the future or hold onto the past or explain why." And finally, another communicator concluded, "that he took great pains to communicate what he knew at that time and to keep communicating things as he learned them. He exhibited qualities that people needed at that point, reassurance, hope, and resolve."

While only a few managers indicated that their leadership had proactively driven their organizations to prepare for a comprehensive crisis event, the majority of participants now believe that 9/11 has caused their leaders to look differently at how prepared they are to deal with another catastrophic crisis.

One organization has already conducted extensive evaluations of their crisis public relations response and has upgraded their ability to communicate with key decision makers through the purchase of enhanced mobile communications systems. Another has begun to develop a comprehensive employee evacuation and medical response system in the event they encounter a biological or chemical attack. And yet another organization has offered to develop crisis communication plans for all their regional offices throughout the United States, an initiative that "fell on deaf ears before 9/11."

The several communicators said that their senior managers now believe that the organizations are better prepared to handle a crisis but also realize that more resources will be required to meet the changing business environment. As one communicator commented, "we need to think seriously about how we could conduct a large scale simulation to truly test how we would respond to a significant crisis at one of our facilities, where we were in fact the target of an attack. Our leadership's interest is now at a heightened sense of urgency but we can't lose focus. It's no longer business as usual."

One manager also made an interesting observation that requires some level of corrective action. "Our crisis plan calls for the level below the senior managers to really run the show. However, in the last three crises that we have had, it was the senior management team and the crisis communicators that took charge and implemented the plan. Obviously, how we operate is different from how the plan is written. While we have institutionalized this behavior and it works extremely well, we'll need to update the plan to reflect this more functional and appropriate response system."

For the majority of the participants, they saw a fundamental need to have a crisis plan in place and warned organizations that didn't have one to beware. As one senior manager indicated, "the plan gives you the guidance, the process that will enable you to manage the event. It must be a living and flexible document so that you can respond to the unique circumstances of each crisis." She went on to say that while it is possible for an organization to fail in its response to a crisis even if it has a plan, "those that don't have a plan are jeopardizing the organization's overall viability. Sure they can succeed but the stars, the moon and the sun need to be perfectly aligned."

That was the consensus of all participants that it was possible to succeed without a plan, but that it was very dangerous. "A plan gives you the framework, it tells you what stakeholders you need to communicate in order to safeguard the reputation of the organization. Operating without a plan leaves you vulnerable to forgetting to communicate with key stakeholders, and all you need is one misstep and that small crisis can become an international debacle in no time at all."

For many organizations, 9/11 gave them the opportunity to test their crisis public relations systems in real time. The organizations that participated in this research, save and accept for the nutrition company, have evaluated what they could do better and what improved preparations need to be put in place. Their organizations also saw a level of crisis leadership that had not been witnessed before by their employees. As one manager said, "the employees have exhibited the benefits of this new leadership throughout the organizations through increased trust, satisfaction and commitment in our senior management team." In essence, stronger leadership during a time of crisis has the potential to increase the employees' sense of trust, satisfaction, and commitment in the management of the organization.

RQ3 How has the demand for crisis public relations by the dominant coalition changed following the 9/11 attacks?

These organizations are living examples of Dozier et al.'s demand-delivery loop. All communicators indicated that there was a high demand for public relations by their senior managers well before the 9/11 attacks: "huge, unmanageable," "very high," "we are the victims of our own success." In fact, as one communicator indicated, "our ability to deliver public relations throughout the organization has lead to a ten-fold increase in our staff and resources. The good news is that we are in high demand, the bad news is that we are in high demand."

As one manager stated, "we have a high level of demand for communications all the time... We have worked over the last four years to develop strong working relationships with our business leaders and they rely heavily on us for their communication needs." Another manager, who acknowledged that some members of the management team would see public relations as only a technical function, saw a new level of strategic output during the crisis: "our public relations team was able to show their stuff during the crisis. As a result, they have enlightened a number of our managers to the strategic nature of public relations. It will however be an uphill battle."

The managers and the communicators all suggested that while there is a heightened demand for crisis public relations during a crisis, they did not believe that the

9/11 attacks would lead to a significant change in the demand. However, one communicator has already seen a change from how regional managers see public relations: "I know the level of demand has changed because we are getting requests from the geographic regions that we never had before. More consultation and more oversight in preparing them for dealing with crises on a local basis."

Once again, the nutrition company gives us another perspective. The communicator said that the demand has not changed because of 9/11. "Why don't I think anything has changed...because they didn't do anything during the 9/11 crisis...Things just sort of went on as usual." Her manager, who indicated that there had been a change in the divisional management since the 9/11 attacks, believes that the demand will change. "Our employees will demand a change. Already we are hearing that they were dissatisfied with the tardiness of the messages from our former divisional president. I believe that the new leader will react differently and that communication with our employees will take on a new level of demand for our public relations staff."

This heightened demand and delivery has also lead to increased value for public relations in most of the organizations. The work that the communicators did during the 9/11 crisis gave them more prominence and accountability which as a result increased their value in the eyes of most senior managers. According to one manager, "while some of our executives don't get it, I know who the President will go to during a time our crisis or other times when we need to more strategically communicate with our key stakeholders -- our Director of Public Relations." A communicator indicated that he believed that "they moved the needle" but stated "we were on that road before 9/11. Our response just made the road that much shorter."

We are left with one comment from a seasoned communicator who has seen his fair share of crises including assisting a major international airline after a crash that killed nearly 300 passengers:

"What has radically changed since the events of 9/11 is the focus on internal communications. Organizations were tested to see if they had the capability to effectively communicate with their own people and explain what was going on at a time of mass confusion. Those that did that very well in a crisis mode ended up with better and stronger organizations. Those that did not ended up with confused organizations that probably had a hard time getting back on their feet and getting back to business."

Summary

The findings indicated a number of patterns that emerged that help us better understand the characteristics of effective crisis public relations. All but one organization said that their focus was on how to best communicate with their internal audiences and meet their information and human needs during this tragic time. Those organizations that were able to respond within hours of the attacks showed a higher level of preparedness, a stronger sense of leadership and a more open and participatory culture. Their crisis public relations efforts have increased trust, satisfaction and commitment with their key stakeholders and have raised the bar for how they will need to respond during future crises. As a result, many of the organizations have already begun the process of evaluating their efforts and making the necessary improvements or changes to their crisis public relations plans.

Both managers and communicators said that they believed that New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani was the best example of crisis leadership and indicated that the traits and characteristics that he displayed would be valuable assets for their senior managers.

Finally, the organizations (except for the nutrition company) had already experienced a high level of demand for public relations and because of the delivery of both technical and strategic support were valued by at least the most senior leaders of their organizations.

Discussion

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the role of crisis public relations in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. The research specifically sought to understand how the perceptions of public relations, the manner in which leadership, organizational culture and crisis preparation affected an organization's ability to respond to the crisis. Furthermore, the study sought to understand the level of demand and delivery of public relations before and after the 9/11 attacks and to what extent the value of public relations had increased as a result of the crisis.

The perceptions of public relations were positive for those organizations that had participatory cultures and transformational leaders which supports the concept that executive perceptions are the fundamental and initiating variable in determining potential outcomes from a crisis (Pearson & Clair, 1998). Additionally, those organizations that displayed a positive crisis mindset also provided their public relations departments with the resources and authority to anticipate, develop and implement two-way crisis communication systems (Marra, 1997).

Obviously strong and anticipatory crisis public relations does increase one's ability to be prepared, as has been displayed by four out the five organizations studied (Mitroff, 2001). It is high-level function, residing in or near the executive suites, has mechanisms and structures to prepare the organization for potential crises. That was certainly the case in at least three of the companies where the senior public relations practitioner was charged with developing, implementing, and revising their crisis public relations plans. Furthermore, these practitioners, while not reporting directly to the senior leader of the organization, had either dotted line responsibility or the ability to have direct access during a crisis.

While none of the organizations that were interviewed were directly involved in the New York or Pentagon attacks, the majority did realized a number of benefits as a result of the crisis (Burnett, 1994; Ulmer & Sellnow, 2000). The organizations indicated that the crisis has drawn them closer together, has identified pitfalls that were not recognized before 9/11, and has increased the level of trust, satisfaction, and commitment of their employees.

Of particular significance for these organizations was the speed in which interactive technologies enabled them to communicate directly with the majority of their employees. While the phone systems in the New York area were down, internet and broadcast voice mail services were still available and depended upon heavily at this time. Although these types of communication vehicles are not considered traditional, two-way methods of communication, a number of organizations used the technology to solicit input and gauge how well their employees were coping with the crisis.

As these examples have shown, effective public relations, especially during a crisis, can build stronger communities within these organizations (Kruckeberg & Starck, 1988). The interactive technologies provided a mechanism to create communications exchanges and facilitate the opportunity for community discussions within the organizations (Bessette, 1997).

This study does support the demand-delivery theory of public relations. In four of the cases, there was evidence of high levels of demand, before and after 9/11, and as a result, high levels of delivery of public relations services. Managers and communicators alike indicated that they there was an intense and positive demand and delivery cycle for public relations services within their respective organizations. While demand and delivery increased moderately during and after the 9/11 attacks, there was a sense that the demand, and therefore the resultant delivery of public relations tactics and advice, was in line with the routine expectations of both groups. In the case of the nutrition company, it showed the opposite effect: in the hours and days following the attacks, there was no demand for public relations, even though a team of communicators had provided a unsolicited plan of action for the organization. As a result, it took this company more than two weeks before it issued its first employee communication on the company's response to the crisis.

Limitations

There are number of limitations to this study that deserve consideration. First and foremost, the data represents the perceptions and insights of only 10 public relations practitioners and organizational managers. Furthermore, the data has only been gathered from three multi-national companies and two regional organizations. The experiences of the participants helped to identify key characteristics of crisis public relations but we cannot extend the findings past these individuals.

While it was opportune to investigate crisis public relations in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the results may not be reflective of how each of these organizations would respond to other types of crises or organizational conflicts under "normal" crisis conditions. This was a national tragedy, which significantly affected all Americans and as such, the traditional method of communicating during a crisis event may have been impacted by these events. None of the organizations that were studied caused the crisis, none of them had to apologize for these events and none can offer any restitution. Therefore, while the answers that the participants have given us are important and significant in helping establish a theoretical framework for crisis public relations, the manner in which each organization responded could be deemed "unusual." At the same time, some of the methods that were used could also be described as "raising the stakes" for future crisis responses and as such, these organizations will be evaluated in the future by how well they meet the new marks that they have established.

In addition, the researcher has not observed the participants nor studied the management behaviors of the organizations during a crisis. Furthermore, the assessment of each crisis communication plans and structure was not part of this research however, it would be a valuable addition to future studies.

This study of communicator and managers perceptions of crisis public relations suggests opportunities for future research endeavors, which could include: in-depth interviews with the most senior organizational leader to gain their perceptions of the value of crisis public relations; participant observations of an organizations development and implementation of a crisis communication plan, including how organizations manage potential organizational conflict in developing the plans; and a more comprehensive study of the relationship between an organization's culture and its crisis leadership and preparedness.

Conclusion

Crises befall organizations every day. Those that prepare for a crisis and have an open culture, lead by a transformational leader, have a greater chance of surviving the event. This study sought to better our understanding of those factors that the previous research had suggested are critical to the successful outcome of crisis public relations: perceptions and mindset of the senior managers, the leadership, culture and preparedness of the organization, the demand for public relations. In order to continue the process of building a crisis public relations theory, more research and testing of the leadership, culture, preparedness, and demand and delivery of public relations during crisis events is required.

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An Analysis of the Relationships Among Structure, Influence, and Gender:

Helping to Build a Feminist Theory of Public Relations

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Abstract

Feminist scholars have suggested that the organizational context may be to blame for the powerlessness of some female public relations practitioners. This study assessed this claim by using feminist theory and a structural framework. Women had less formal structural power than men, but there were no gender differences in relationship power or influence. Consistent with feminist hypothesizing and the structural framework, practitioners' influence was related to both their formal structural power and relationship power—not gender.

An Analysis of the Relationships Among Structure, Influence, and Gender: Helping to Build a Feminist Theory of Public Relations

A recurring theme throughout much of the research on gender and public relations is that the organizational environment may be responsible for why some female public relations practitioners lack influence in their organizations (L.A. Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001; Hon, 1995; Hon, L.A. Grunig, & Dozier, 1992; Serini, Toth, Wright, & Emig, 1998; Tam, Dozier, Lauzen, & Real, 1995; Toth, Serini, Wright, & Emig, 1998). According to the *structuralist perspective,* the varying behaviors of men and women are due to conditions inside the organization. Structuralists, such as management theorist Kanter (1976, 1977), contend that power is embedded in the organization and constrains the influence of women in a number of occupations.

The arguments of many feminist public relations scholars are representative of the structuralist perspective. For example, Toth et al. (1998) argued that more women than men fulfill the technician role—a less powerful role than the managerial role—because of the very different organizational experiences received on the job. Hon et al. (1992) reasoned that the blocked advancement of some female public relations practitioners results, in part, from issues of organizational power that repress them. Hon's (1995) in-depth interviews and focus groups with female public relations practitioners uncovered a host of organizational factors that discriminate against them: exclusion from influential networks, a paucity of role models and mentors, a male-dominated organizational environment, and more. Tam et al.'s (1995) study revealed that female public relations supervisors' mentoring yields low career advancement opportunities for their subordinates, many of whom are women. Tam et al. explained that the disparity between men's and women's status in public relations is due, in part, to "structurally enduring patterns of gender discrimination" (p. 270).

In a recent study on sexual harassment in public relations, female public relations practitioners explained that subtle—but pernicious—forms of sexual harassment are used to discriminate them (Serini et al., 1998). Serini et al. concluded that because female public relations practitioners must contend with discrimination, they are marginalized as managers. In their words, female public relations practitioners are being given "titles without influence" (p. 194). The researchers go on to voice concern regarding the ability of female public relations practitioners to influence the strategic decisions of senior management. If women, who represent the growing majority of the public relations field, are unable to actively participate in the negotiations that shape the organization because they lack influence, then the worth and value of public relations will diminish (see also Dozier, 1988).

Although research suggests that female public relations practitioners may lack influence because of subtle organizational dynamics and formal structure, no research has systematically examined whether (a) differences really exist in the influence of female and male public relations practitioners, and (b) what factors account for potential differences. This study will begin to fill that gap. The study used feminist theory and the structuralist perspective for examining the relationships among organizational structure, gender, and influence in public relations. The purpose was to assess whether female public relations practitioners have less influence than male public relations practitioners because of inequities in formal power and relationship power that derive from the organizational environment.

A Review of the Literature

Power and Influence in Public Relations

The distinction between power and influence is subtle, but important. Here, power is defined as "the capacity to effect (or affect) organizational outcomes" (Mintzberg, 1983, p. 4).

In adhering to the structuralist framework of this study, the focus here is on how individuals' power is shaped by conditions within the organization. Influence is "a transaction in which one person (or group) acts in such a way as to change the behavior of an individual (or group) in some intended fashion" (Katz & Kahn, 1966, p. 550). In other words, influence is the exercise of power. Katz and Kahn explain: "Power does not have to be enacted for it to exist, whereas influence does; it is the demonstrated use of power (p. 550). Here, influence is defined as the public relations practitioner's effect on the decisions of senior management pertaining to "an organization's goods and services, its policies, and its behavior" (Dozier, L.A. Grunig, & J.E. Grunig, 1995, p. 75).

Public relations practitioners need power and influence to perform their jobs (Dozier et al., 1995; L.A. Grunig, 1992b). As noted by L.A. Grunig, if public relations truly represents the "management of communication between an organization and its publics" (J.E. Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 6), then public relations practitioners should actively participate in the decision-making process of senior management, helping them to consider and act upon the viewpoints of key publics when making strategic decisions. However, because of the ill-defined role of the public relations function, public relations practitioners' job descriptions do not guarantee them power in their organizations. Public relations practitioners may thus have to carve out an influential role among senior managers who may have various views about public relations (Dozier et al.).

Public relations scholars have been interested for some time in what makes the public relations practitioner powerful and influential in the organization. Some scholars have emphasized the importance of individual attributes, such as professionalism and expertise (Plowman, 1998), ability to engage in environmental scanning (Dozier, 1988), expertise to practice a two-way model of public relations (J.E. Grunig & L.A. Grunig, 1989), knowledge of a particular business or industry (Plowman), and knowledge and experience in solving public relations problems (Plowman). Other scholars have relied on systems theory and focused on structural variables such as the public relations practitioner's place within the organizational hierarchy (J.E. Grunig, 1976; L.A. Grunig, 1992b; Dozier et al., 1995), the structure of the public relations department (Dozier & L.A. Grunig, 1992; L.A. Grunig, 1992a), the public relations practitioner's inclusion in the dominant coalition (Dozier et al.; J.E. Grunig & L.A. Grunig) and role tasks (Lauzen & Dozier, 1992). Yet other researchers have noted the importance of another kind of power—power as defined by the quality of relationships that the public relations practitioner has with the dominant coalition (Dozier et al.; Plowman). According to these researchers, public relations practitioners must prove their value and worth by establishing quality relationships with members of the dominant coalition.

This power research has not adequately addressed the unique experiences of women working in public relations. Implicit in the line of research on individual attributes is that female public relations practitioners can be more influential if they merely adopt one or more of the attributes (i.e., gain more education or experience in solving public relations problems). Yet, female public relations practitioners' adoption of these attributes does nothing to eradicate organizational conditions—such as subtle forms of sexual harassment. Second, while there has been tremendous interest in why female public relations practitioners do not more frequently fulfill the managerial role, no research has examined whether there are gender differences in organizational position. It may be that when role tasks and place within the organizational hierarchy are viewed in the aggregate, women have less overall power than men.

The third stream of research indicates that personal relationships and personal chemistry are instrumental to securing value and support from the dominant coalition. Yet, some female public relations practitioners have lamented about a lack of mentors, exclusion from influential networks, and perceptions of devaluation and subordination (L.A. Grunig et al., 2001; Hon, 1995; Hon et al., 1992; Serini et al., 1998). Women may be constrained in their ability to form personal relationships with members of the dominant coalition, and, thus, in their ability to secure value and respect.

Feminist theory is appropriate for rewriting traditional research design to incorporate women and to describe how supposedly neutral descriptions of reality have neglected women (Buzzanell, 1994). As Hon (1995) points out, few research studies have examined gender issues in public relations from the perspective of women. Moreover, much of the early research on women and public relations lacked a theoretical perspective (Toth, 2001). This study attempts to fill these two gaps. Because this study is informed by feminist theory, attention is directed to those organizational measures of power that some female public relations practitioners appear to lack: their relegation to the technician role, their position within the organizational hierarchy, their degree of employee support, being a token woman among a predominantly male-dominated, senior-management team, their lack of mentors, their exclusion from networks, and their lack of respect and value. The intent of this study is to assess whether there are gender differences in influence due to differences in these measures of power. The structuralist perspective frames this research study.

Structuralist Perspective of Gender, Power, and Influence

According to the structuralist perspective, the structure of the organizational environment is assumed to be the primary determinant of outcomes such as career success and one's ability to exert influence (Kanter, 1976, 1977; Smith & Grenier, 1982). In this view, women's position in the organization has hindered their ability to be influential. Structuralists reject the notion that socialization encourages the internalization of cultural norms that prompt men and women to behave differently in organization. Advocates of this socialization perspective maintain that women tend to not fare as well as men in organizations because their socialized behaviors are not as valued as those of men—regardless of structure (Hennig & Jardim, 1977). In contrast to this socialization perspective, structuralist theorists maintain that apparent gender differences in influence are due to power differences created by the organizational structure, not socialization.

Perhaps one of the most influential scholars of the structuralist perspective is Kanter (1976, 1977), whose classic book, Men and Women of the Corporation, is based upon a case study of large, bureaucratic organization. Scholars from a variety of disciplines continue to turn to Kanter's seminal work when investigating the complex interplay among power, gender, and structure in a wide range of organizations (Harper & Hirokawa, 1988; Hirokawa, Kodama, & Harper, 1990; Mainiero, 1986; Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989; Schlueter, Barge, & Blakenship, 1990). This researcher also turned to Kanter's case study in order to examine commonalities among the findings of Kanter's work and the experiences of female public relations practitioners. Although this study's theoretical framework derives from Kanter's work, the particularities of the study are updated according to public relations scholarship.

Kanter (1976, 1977) contends that individuals' power is determined not by one organizational factor, such as place within the organizational hierarchy, but by the structure of the total organizational system. To understand potential gender differences in organizational influence, Kanter argues that we must investigate the location and role of formal positions within the organizational hierarchical system, the ratios of gender in groups, and informal relationships within the system. According to Kanter, individual behaviors in organizations bear a relationship to one of these three variables. The variables are so related in an interacting way that they become difficult to untangle. The result is that low opportunity, powerlessness, and tokenism "constitute self-perpetuating, self-sealing systems, with links that can be broken only from outside" (1977, p. 249). This is why Kanter refers to the organization as a total system.

Women's Exclusion From Formal Power Structures

According to structuralist theorists (Kanter, 1976, 1977; Smith & Grenier, 1982), women often have less influence than men, in part, due to their exclusion from formal power structures. Because these structures are out of individuals' control, they are referred to as formal (Kanter).

Organizational roles are one manifestation of the formal structure of the organization. Due to the division of labor in organizations, roles vary in how much they help to solve pressing problems and to reduce uncertainty for the organization (Crozier, 1971; Hickson, Hinings, Schneck, & Pennings, 1974). Research suggests that women in a number of professions are often channeled into roles that are routine in nature, that offer limited relevance to organizational problems, and that grant them reduced participation in activities central to the operations of the organization (Bartol, 1978; Kanter, 1976, 1977; Smith & Grenier, 1982).

Gender inequities in the role tasks of female and male public relations practitioners are well documented (Broom, 1982; Broom & Dozier, 1986; Dozier et al., 1995; Toth & L.A. Grunig, 1993; Toth et al., 1998). A number of studies indicate that many women are segregated into the lower-level technician role, spending time on routine activities such as writing, editing, and handling of media relations. Conversely, more men are promoted into the more powerful managerial role, engaging in such activities as counseling senior management and making key policy decisions. Even when women perform the managerial role, they tend to spend more time on technician activities than men (Dozier et al; Toth & L.A. Grunig; Toth et al.). Because technicians remain relatively isolated from important decision-making processes, technicians do not derive as much power as managers (Lauzen & Dozier, 1992).

Structuralists also contend that individuals' power increases or decreases depending on their place within the organizational hierarchy (Kanter, 1976, 1977; Smith & Grenier, 1982). Individuals located relatively high in the hierarchy tend to make non-routine decisions that help to reduce uncertainty for the organization (Smith & Grenier).

Public relations scholars, too, maintain that public relations practitioners should be located high in the organizational hierarchy in order to derive power (L.A. Grunig, 1992b). Public relations practitioners whose communication and recommendations to the chief executive officer (CEO) or president are filtered through others may possess less power than practitioners who maintain a direct line with the CEO. However, according to one female public relations practitioner, organizations are sometimes restructured "to make public relations less than senior management" (Hon, 1995, p. 44). Some public relations practitioners—men and women—do not report directly to the CEO. Instead, the public relations function is placed under departments such as marketing or human resources, which, in turn, reports to the CEO. To date, it remains unknown whether there are gender differences in direct reporting relationships with either the CEO or president.

Individuals' degree of power also stems from the number of persons under their management (Mechanic, 1962; Smith & Grenier, 1982). The underlying argument is that individuals who manage a good number of people are in a better position to take advantage of powerful subordinates and to garner valuable information (Kanter, 1977).

Female public relations practitioners may have less employee support than men working in public relations (Dozier et al., 1995). According to the Excellence study, on average, female senior public relations managers supervise eight employees whereas men supervise 19 employees. Dozier et al. reasoned that because female public relations practitioners have fewer employees, they may have to double their roles as technicians and managers.

The gender ratios of work groups also impact the degree of power that individuals attain (Bartol, 1978; Kanter, 1976, 1977). As elaborated by Kanter, the few of one social type in a group are called tokens, because they are often treated as representatives of their social category. The majority are coined dominants because their numerical domination enables them to define the culture and group. In her case study of a large organization, Kanter found that tokens (in her case, women) had to deal with negative stereotypes. Tokens also had to work hard at presenting a persona that fit in with the dominant culture, but had to be careful not to threaten interfering with dominant culture. In short, tokens lack support. More importantly, a number of management empirical studies have indicated that tokens have less organizational power than dominants (Izraeli, 1983; Kanter; Spangler, Gordon, & Pipkin, 1978).

If public relations does indeed represent a "velvet ghetto of affirmative action," as originally coined by a 1978 Business Week article, then female public relations practitioners may be representative of one of the few token women among a male-dominated senior management team. In Hon's (1995) focus group, a director of community relations for a county school system lamented that she was the only woman among the all-male staff members at her school. When working for a global, highly ranked public relations firm where all the top managers and vice presidents were male, Aldoory (2001) confided that she "was goaded by the corporate vice president to date a client in order to increase business" (p. 111). Hon et al. (1992) explained that when few women are part of senior management, female public relations practitioners may find the organizational climate unreceptive to them.

Women's Exclusion From Informal Power Structures

Structuralists maintain that those individuals who are part of the formal power structures are able to empower themselves by forging ties with influential others and securing favorable perceptions (Kanter, 1976, 1977). It is of no surprise, then, that research indicates that women in a number of professions may be less connected to informal power structures than men (Brass, 1984; Kanter; Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). This only further reduces their power because they may not receive valuable information, resources, or support (Ragins & Sundstrom). Individuals gain what is coined relationship power in this study as a result of active participation in influential networks, beneficial relationships with influential mentors, and based upon the favorable perceptions of others (Ragins & Sundstrom).

A network is a group of individuals who regularly exchange information, support, and favors (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). Because networks facilitate information sharing, decision-making, and friendship and support, they provide an important source of power to participants (Brass, 1984; Kanter, 1977; Mechanic, 1962; Ragins & Sundstrom). In his study of a newspaper publishing company, Brass found that women had greater difficulty than men integrating into the networks of the dominant coalition. Brass also found that integration into the networks of the dominant coalition was associated with greater organizational influence.

Some female public relations practitioners have lamented of isolation from informal social networks—referred to as the "good-old-boy" network by some (L.A. Grunig et al., 2001; Hon, 1995). Female public relations practitioners explain that they are periodically excluded from male networks, both informally on the golf course and basketball court and formally at the management table where important business gets done.

While mentors might compensate for women's exclusion from important networks, research suggests that women in many occupations do have not access to mentors (Kanter, 1976, 1977; Noe, 1988). Women's power may thus be further diminished. In a study of a health care industry, Fagenson (1988) found that individuals who had mentors reported having greater influence on organizational policy. Mentors can also provide power to protégés by alerting protégés to upcoming promotions and assisting them in obtaining promotions (Kram, 1985). Kanter (1977) described mentors as "absolutely essential for women" (p. 183) because "women need even more the signs of such influence and the access to real power provided by sponsors" (p. 183).

Research suggests that female public relations practitioners may lack access to powerful role models and mentors (L.A. Grunig et al., 2001; Hon, 1995; Hon et al., 1992). For example, women in academia often lack the opportunity to foster relationships with mentors (L.A. Grunig, 1989, as cited in L.A. Grunig et al.). In one study designed to measure the impact of mentoring relationships on career advancement, it was found that male mentors yielded greater career advancement opportunities for their subordinates than female mentors (Tam et al., 1995). Because men are the majority in senior management positions, female public relations practitioners may have more difficulty pairing with an influential mentor. Consequently, female public relations practitioners may not be groomed in business skills that prepare them to assume an active role on the senior-management team.

In addition to network participation and relationships with mentors, women can be more or less powerful based upon the perceptions of others in the organization (Kanter, 1977; Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). For example, French and Raven's (1959) concept of referent power is based upon an individual's personal attractiveness to others so that others are likely to identify or seek a relationship. Mechanic (1962) articulated the importance of the power of attractiveness, which stems from individuals' personality as perceived by others. The gender ratios of work groups may also set into motion perceptual processes such as exaggerations of behaviors and stereotypes of the token(s) in the group (Kanter). Because women may not be perceived as favorably, their power is further reduced.

Women working in public relations have lamented about having to deal with sexual harassment, male-defined rules, and an unreceptive organizational climate (L.A. Grunig et al., 2001; Hon, 1995; Serini et al., 1998). Moreover, some women have said that they must contend with negative stereotypes, such as being just the "PR gal" (L.A. Grunig et al.; Hon). L.A. Grunig et al. reasoned that the disparity in status between men and women in public relations might be due to "perceptions of power" (p. 102). What all of this means is that female public relations practitioners may not have as much power as men working in public relations due to less than favorable perceptions about themselves and their contributions.

Study Rationale and Hypotheses

Rich details provided by focus groups and interviews (L.A. Grunig et al., 2001; Hon, 1995; Serini et al., 1998) as well as a number of studies pertaining to the inequities in roles between men and women (Broom & Dozier, 1982; Dozier & Broom, 1986; Toth & L.A. Grunig, 1993; Toth et al., 1998) indicate that women working in public relations may lack organizational power because of their exclusion from both formal and informal power structures. The literature review of this study parallels the findings of L.A. Grunig et al. (2001): "Women face a complex system of indirect barriers to advancement" (p. 292). If women do lack measures of organizational power, then Serini et al.'s claim that female public relations practitioners will lack influence in the future appears probable. The intent of this study is to test whether such a pattern does exist. This is an important issue to investigate, because women represent the growing majority of the public relations field. If women are unable to exert influence on the decisions of senior management, then the field may become one in which public relations practitioners—both men and women—do nothing more than execute the decisions of senior management (Serini et al.).

Women's unique experiences have not been examined in the research on the power of the public relations practitioner. This study attempts to fill this gap by examining those measures of organizational power that management scholarship and public relations scholarship indicate that female public relations lack; this is why this study is informed by feminist theory. In light of the literature that indicates that female public relations practitioners may be excluded from both formal and informal power structures, the following hypotheses are posited:

> H1: Female public relations practitioners will have a lower amount of formal structural power than male public relations practitioners.
>
> H2: Female public relations practitioners will have a lower amount of relationship power than male public relations practitioners.

The two research streams on women in public relations and the power of the public relations practitioner have examined a variety of variables. This study uses feminist theory and a structuralist perspective to systematically investigate the relationships among power, gender, and influence in public relations. This study is designed to test a structuralist perspective that says that the formal and informal power that result from the structure of organizations accounts for potential gender differences in organizational influence. If the structuralist perspective holds true here, then formal and relationship power should be related to the influence of the public relations practitioner. Gender should not be the basis for potential differences in influence. Based upon the research reviewed, it is expected that female public relations practitioners will have less influence than men because they have less formal structural power and relationship power. The following hypotheses are thus proposed:

H3: Formal structural power will be positively associated with public relations practitioners' perceived organizational influence.

H4: Relationship power will be positively associated with public relations practitioners' perceived organizational influence.

H5: Gender will not be significantly related to public relations practitioners' perceived organizational influence.

H6: Female public relations practitioners will perceive having a lower amount of influence than male public relations practitioners—not because of their gender, but because of a lower amount of relationship and formal structural power.

Method

Although qualitative methodology is typically associated with the feminist paradigm, a quantitative method was appropriate to answer the feminist questions of this study. As delineated by Reinharz (1992), survey research holds great value for contemporary feminists. First, survey research is useful for generalizing from a small to large population, as is the case in this study. Second, whereas qualitative feminist studies typically provide rich, descriptive data, quantitative methods seek to move beyond the descriptive to explain "why" and "what" is going on (Reinharz, p. 80). Third, feminist researchers use survey research to test theory. The developing theory of women in public relations indicates that the organizational environment may account for the disparity in status between men and women. This study seeks to examine this specific component of the theory.

Sampling procedures, data collection, and measurement of the variables are described next.

Sampling Procedures

Because this study sought to examine organizational measures that were likely to be found only in large corporations—such as participation in the networks of the dominant coalition and various levels of hierarchy—corporate public relations practitioners were an appropriate sample. Senior-level practitioners were targeted due to the study's interest in the influence of the public relations practitioner on the decisions of senior management.

The sampling frame of corporate public relations practitioners was drawn from the O'Dwyer's Directory of Corporate Communications (2000). This directory was selected because it includes 4,000 senior-level public relations practitioners who work for large, diverse corporations. Based upon a systematic random sampling process, a final sample size of 1,504 names was secured.

Data Collection

An initial survey questionnaire was constructed and mailed to 49 corporate public relations practitioners located in Colorado and Utah. All public relations practitioners living in Colorado and Utah and working in corporate public relations were drawn from the Public Relations Society of America's The Blue Book and selected for the pretest. Thirty-four of the 49 practitioners responded (70% women and 30% men). Verbal feedback also was solicited from three former public relations practitioners (two women and one man) who were located at the same university as the researcher. Based upon the feedback, minor modifications were made to the survey questionnaire.

The survey questionnaire, a personalized cover letter inviting participants to complete the survey questionnaire, and a prepaid business reply envelope were mailed to 1,504 respondents in October 2000. Ten days following the dissemination of the survey questionnaires, a reminder postcard was mailed to bolster the response rate. A total of 309 individuals returned the survey questionnaire, yielding a response rate of 20.9%. This response rate is in line with Troy's (1998) survey of corporate communications managers in Fortune industrial and service companies (22.4%).

Measurement

Independent Variable #1: Formal Structural Power

Formal structural power is a multidimensional construct that stems from the structural arrangement of the organization as manifested in employee support, organizational roles, hierarchical position, and gender ratios of work groups. More specifically, it was operationalized as an additive index constructed from the summation of scores on four measures: the amount of employee support, the practitioner's degree of fulfillment of a managerial role, the public relations practitioner's place within the hierarchy, and the gender ratio of the dominant coalition. The rationale for the addition of the four items stems from the work of Kanter (1977), who argued that an individual's organizational power results from multiple factors. Power is cumulative. It is not expected that the four items in the index be related. To illustrate, a female public relations practitioner might secure some power based upon a direct reporting relationship with the CEO, then gain even more power because she manages a large department. So that the scores on the four measures could be added to construct one index of formal structural power, the individual scores were transformed to standardized Z scores. The questions used to measure the scales and indexes of this study are provided in the appendix.

Employee support.

Employee support was operationalized as the number of full-time employees in the public relations practitioner's department as a percentage of the organization's full-time employees. The power of the public relations practitioner increases as this percentage increases.

Fulfillment of a managerial role.

This measure pertains to the degree to which the public relations practitioner fulfills the powerful managerial role. The power of the practitioner increases the greater the degree to which he or she assumes managerial role tasks. The 16-item scale that was used in the Excellence study (Dozier et al., 1995) was used to measure this factor. Respondents were asked to indicate how often they performed a series of 16 tasks, based upon scale anchors of "never" (1) and "very frequently" (7). Four items were intended to measure each of these four roles: communication manager, senior adviser, communication technician, and media relations. The communication manager and senior adviser are both managerial. Communication managers possess the formal authority to make communication policy decisions, and senior advisers possess the informal power to influence decisions of the dominant coalition (Dozier et al.). Conversely, the media relations role is focused on media activities and the communication technician role is focused on producing written materials. This study's emphasis on power warranted using a scale that could differentiate among the managerial roles and the type of power embedded within them.

However, as indicated by Table 1, a principal components factor analysis with a varimax rotation yielded three, not four, interpretable factors for the 16-item scale. Items whose factor loadings were at least .50 on one factor and no more than .30 on any other factor were retained. The total item variance explained by the three-factor solution was 55%. The three interpretable factors produced were communication manager role, technician role, and media relations role. Since only one item loaded clearly on factor four, this factor was excluded from subsequent analysis. Because two of the senior adviser role items loaded highly on factor one, the four communication manager role items and two senior adviser role items were collapsed into one factor-derived sub-scale that appears to measure a general communication managerial role. A reliability analysis conducted on the managerial subscale indicated that it is internally consistent (Cronbach's alpha = .8716). Respondents' score on the managerial subscale was included in the summation of the additive index of formal structural power.

Table 1 about here

Place within the hierarchy.

This variable was measured by asking respondents the title of the primary person to whom they report. Titles were assigned by the researcher and an independent coder to one of three categories that are representative of varying amounts of power and that differ in their level of authority. Individuals reporting to either the CEO, president, or chairman secured 3 points because public relations practitioners need to be located at the top of the organizational hierarchy to have the formal authority for action (L.A. Grunig, 1992b). Individuals reporting to executive level positions—titles that included the terms senior vice president or vice president—secured 2 points. Finally, those practitioners reporting to junior executive/managerial positions—titles that included the terms director or manager—secured 1 point.

Gender ratio of the dominant coalition.

This measure provides an indication of the gender structuring of an influential organizational work group. Individuals obtain power when they are surrounded by a senior management team composed of individuals of the same gender as themselves. The variable was measured by asking respondents to provide the number of men and women who make up the inner circle (dominant coalition). The percentage of women in the dominant coalition was calculated for female respondents. The percentage of men in the dominant coalition was calculated for male respondents.

Independent Variable #2: Relationship Power

Relationship power refers to power gained as a result of relationships with others in the organization. It was operationalized as an additive index constructed from the summation of standardized scores on three measures for each public relations practitioner: (a) participation in the dominant coalition's informal networks, (b) relationships with mentors, and (c) the value and support received based upon the perceptions of the dominant coalition.

Participation in the dominant coalition's networks.

This measure pertains to public relations practitioners' degree of participation in the communication, advice, and friendship networks of the dominant coalition. Public relations practitioners gain relationship power when they frequently participate in the networks of the dominant coalition. Three of the four items included in the five-point index were based upon the work of management scholar Ibarra (1992). One additional item was developed for this study. Anchors of the index included "not at all" (1) and "a great deal" (5). The four-item index was subjected to a principal components factor analysis with a varimax rotation. One factor was extracted that accounted for 55.25% of the variance, indicating that the index is unidimensional. A reliability analysis indicated that it is internally consistent (Cronbach's alpha = .725).

Mentor relationships.

This measure pertains to the informal relationships that public relations practitioners have with mentors, defined as higher-ranking employees who provide informal career counseling, information and advice, and facilitate access to influential people (Nielson, 1998; Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio, & Feren, 1988). The amount of relationship power that individuals possess stems, in part, from the number of mentors they have had throughout their career, the extent of their mentors' organizational influence, and their mentors' helpfulness. Thus, this study used three questions to measure these three items. One item was based upon the mentor research of management scholar Fagenson (1988), one was adapted from Dozier et al. (1995), and one was developed for this study.

In order to produce one additive index of mentor relationships, the ratio-level data obtained from the two mentor questions were assigned to one of five discrete categories in order to match the ordinal-level data secured from the third question. Because the three items were designed to measure separate, although related, aspects of mentor relationships, a reliability test was not appropriate for this three-item additive index.

Value and support received.

Value pertains to the relative importance that the dominant coalition perceives the public relations practitioner possesses relative to other employees. Although support is related to value, support is a more abstract concept than value (Dozier et al., 1995). It refers to the general support, including a supportive work environment, which the dominant coalition provides to the public relations practitioner, "somewhat separate from actual performance" (Dozier et al., p. 80). The support provided to the public relations practitioner stems from perceptions of the dominant coalition. Public relations practitioners who are valued and supported have more relationship power than public relations practitioners who lack value and support. Four closed-ended items, conceptually based upon the work of the Excellence Study (Dozier et al.), were used to measure value. Three closed-ended, five-point items that were conceptually based upon the qualitative research of Hon (1995) were used to measure the support. Anchors included "not at all" (1) and "a great deal" (5).

To test construct validity, the four-item sub-index and three-item sub-index were subjected to a principal components factor analysis with a varimax rotation. The analysis yielded a one-factor solution that accounted for 64.76% of the variance, indicating that the scale is unidimensional, not two-dimensional. Consequently, the two sub-indexes were combined into one index. A reliability analysis conducted on the seven-item index indicated that it is internally consistent (Cronbach's alpha = .90).

Independent Variable #3: Gender

The third independent variable, gender, was measured by asking respondents their sex in the demographic section of the survey.

Dependent Variable: Perceived Organizational Influence

Influence pertains to attempts of an individual to change the behavior of another individual or group in some intended fashion (Katz & Kahn, 1966). Organizational influence was measured using an additive seven-point, five-item index instrument developed by management scholars Schmidt and Kipnis (1984) and used by others (Schlueter et al., 1990). Cronbach alphas for this index in past studies were .79 (Schmidt & Kipnis) and .84 (Schlueter et al.), indicative of its reliability.

The index was subjected to a principal components factor analysis with a varimax rotation for the present study. The analysis yielded a one-factor solution that accounted for 58.88% of the variance, indicating that the scale is unidimensional. A reliability analysis conducted on this factor-derived scale indicated that is internally consistent (Cronbach's alpha =.812).

Demographic and Organizational Variables

In order to analyze other variables that might account for the influence of public relations practitioners, five variables were measured: (a) professional experience, (b) tenure, (c) age, (d) education, and (e) organizational size.

Results

Description of Participants

As reported in Table 2, 168 (54%) men and 141 (46%) women were included in the sample. Given that participants reported a mean of 15.86 years of public relations experience and a mean age of 46.38, participants appear to be seasoned. Participants work for large corporations, as reflected by a mean of 28,957 employees and a median of 6,000 employees. Female and male respondents significantly differ from one another on many variables. Women are younger and have less education, experience, and organizational tenure. However, female and male respondents do not significantly differ from one another in terms of organizational size.

Table 2 about here

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 predicted that female public relations practitioners would have a lower amount of formal structural power than male public relations practitioners. Tables 3 and 4 provide a comparison of men and women on the individual measures of power. There were no significant differences between men and women on the measures of employee support and fulfillment of the managerial role, although both were in the direction hypothesized. A one-way analysis of variance test indicated that no significant differences exist in the amount of formal structural power gained as a result of reporting relationships among female and male respondents (F (1,304) = 2.90; p = .090). However, it is interesting to note that 39% of male respondents report to the CEO/president (group 1) compared to only 28% of female respondents; calculation of the Z statistic showed this difference in proportion to be statistically significant (Z = 27.87, p < .05). Of the four measures of formal structural power, perhaps most striking is the high percentage of men included in the dominant coalition reported by the sample. The mean percentage of men in the dominant coalition was 84% and 16% for women (see Table 4).

When the four measures are considered in the disaggregate, there are not always differences in the amount of formal structural power between men and women. Yet, when viewed in the aggregate, the small differences create a cumulative difference in overall power. As noted by Table 5, female public relations practitioners have a significantly lower amount of formal structural power than male public relations practitioners. Thus, hypothesis 1a is supported.

Tables 3, 4, and 5 about here

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 1b predicted that female public relations practitioners would have a lower amount of relationship power than male public relations practitioners. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 6. Contrary to expectations, there were no significant differences between men and women on any of the three measures of relationship power. Table 7 presents men's and women's mean scores of relationship power. No significant difference exists in the amount of relationship power of female and male public relations practitioners (t = -.371, df = 270, p = .711). Hence, hypothesis 2 is not supported.

Tables 6 and 7 about here

Hypotheses 3, 4, 5, and 6

Pearson product moment correlation analysis was used to investigate hypotheses 3, 4, and 5. Hypothesis 3 predicted that formal structural power would be positively associated with respondents' perceived organizational influence. Calculation of the Pearson correlation coefficient showed a moderate, positive relationship between formal structural power and perceived organizational influence (r =.437; p = .000). Hence, hypothesis 3 is supported.

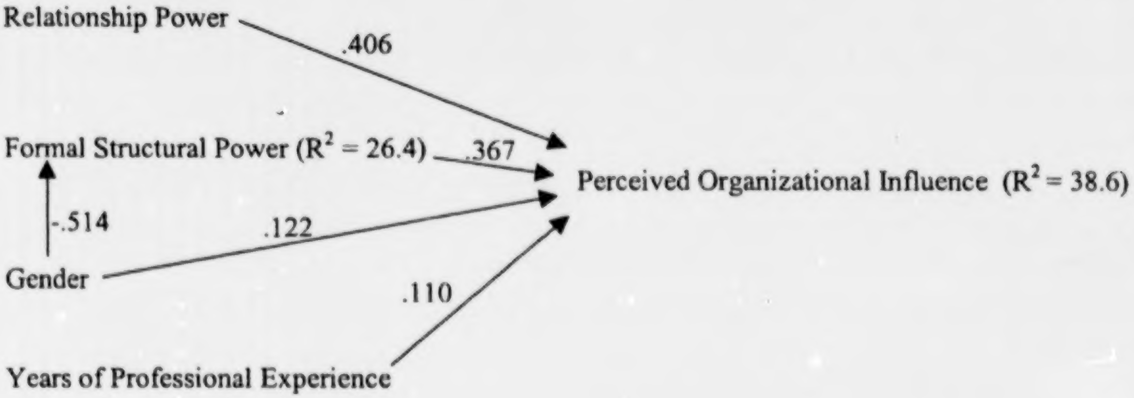
According to hypothesis 4, relationship power would be positively associated with respondents' perceived organizational influence. The results of the Pearson correlation coefficient revealed a relatively large, positive relationship between relationship power and perceived organizational influence (r = .525; p = .000). Thus, hypothesis 4 is also supported.

Hypothesis 5 stated that gender would not be significantly associated with perceived organizational influence. Calculation of the Pearson correlation coefficient indicated that no significant relationship exists between gender and perceived organizational influence (r = -.075; p = .192). Hypothesis 5 is thus confirmed.

According to hypothesis 6, female public relations practitioners would perceive having less organizational influence than male public relations practitioners because of a lower amount of relationship and formal structural power, not gender. An independent-samples t test indicated that there are no significant differences in perceived organizational influence between men (M = 29.15) and women (M = 28.40) (t = -1.308; p = .303).

To further investigate the relationships among the demographic and organizational variables, formal structural power, relationship power, influence, and gender, a path model was devised and analyzed. Regression coefficients (R) are provided in the path model in Figure 1. All marked paths indicate statistically significant relationships between the variables (alpha = .05).

Figure 1.


Relationship Power
.406
Formal Structural Power (R² = 26.4)
.367
Perceived Organizational Influence (R² = 38.6)
-.514
.122
Gender
.110
Years of Professional Experience

The model in Figure 1 illustrates that both relationship power and formal structural power have a moderate, positive effect on perceived organizational influence (R = .406 and .367, respectively). Only one of the five demographic and organizational variables, years of professional experience, is predictive of perceived organizational influence (R = .110).

Contrary to expectations, gender has a positive—although small—direct effect on perceived organizational influence (R = .122). More interesting to note, however, is the indirect effect that gender has on perceived organizational influence as a result of formal structural power. Gender has a moderate, negative effect on formal structural power (R = -.514), suggesting that "being female" leads to less formal structural power. Yet, because formal structural power has a moderate, positive effect on perceived organizational influence (R = .367), the indirect effect of gender on perceived organizational influence is negative (.-514 * .367 = -.1886). When both indirect and direct effects are considered in the aggregate, gender has a negative overall effect on perceived organizational influence (- .1886 + .122 = -.0667). Although women do not have less perceived organizational influence than men, the path model suggests that being female has a negative effective on their influence due to their reduced formal structural power.

The other paths in the model indicate that "being female" does not lead to reduced relationship power. Moreover, there were no differences in perceived organizational influence between men and women. Gender did not have a significant effect on relationship power. Hypothesis 6 is not confirmed.

Discussion

Implicit in feminist public relations scholarship is that female public relations practitioners lack organizational power due to both formal structural factors inside the organization as well as due to their informal relationships with others in their organizations (L.A. Grunig et al., 2001; Hon, 1995; Serini et al., 1998; Toth et al., 1998). According to structuralist theorists, individuals' power is largely shaped by conditions inside the organization, not because of socialization that encourages women to engage in less powerful ways than men (Kanter, 1976, 1977; Smith & Grenier, 1982). This study tested this structuralist perspective by analyzing whether the organizational influence of corporate public relations practitioners was due to formal structural power, relationship power, or gender. Consistent with feminist theory, the constructs of formal structural power and relationship power were derived based upon the unique experiences and voices of women in working in public relations. This study tested feminist theory by determining whether the findings of the previous qualitative research—that female public relations practitioners have inequities in organizational influence due to conditions inside the organization—held true for a larger population.

Feminist public relations scholars (L.A. Grunig et al., 2001; Hon, 1995; Hon et al., 1992; Serini et al.,1998) contend that issues of organizational power prevent some female public relations practitioners from advancing in their organizations. This study's finding that female public relations practitioners have a lower amount of formal structural power supports their claim that female public relations practitioners must contend with factors that lessen their overall organizational power. According to respondents in this study, the dominant coalition consists on average of 84% men and 16% women. Moreover, the finding that a lower proportion of female public relations practitioners report to either the CEO or president (28%, compared to 39% of men) dilutes the organizational power of women. Female public relations practitioners must deal with the stress of having to present a persona that is compatible with a male-dominated dominant coalition and most do not have the benefit of having a direct report relationship with either the CEO or president. When the other two measures of managerial role tasks and employee support are combined with the gender ratio of the dominant coalition and place within the hierarchy, the four measures collectively create an organizational environment that is different for female and male public relations practitioners. This study contributes to a feminist theory of public relations by demonstrating that small, but significant, formal structural power inequities exist for corporate female public relations practitioners.

Toth and L.A. Grunig's (1993) research on the tasks that female and male public relations practitioners perform under the managerial role found that women who predominantly carried out the managerial role were still performing more technician activities than male managers. They concluded that "women managers did 'it all,' for less money" (p. 153) in comparison to male public relations managers. This study's finding that female public relations practitioners have a lower amount of formal structural power lends credence to their conclusion that women may have fewer resources—not necessarily less money but less formal structural power—to assist them. Female public relations practitioners may thus have to work harder than men in fostering effective relationships with the male-dominated dominant coalition.

This study also predicted that female public relations practitioners would have a lower amount of relationship power than male public relations practitioners, based upon the feminist theorizing and research of L.A Grunig et al. (2001), Hon (1995), Hon et al. (1992), and Serini et al. (1998). Many of the concerns of women participating in focus groups and interviews done by these researchers pertained to relationship power: a lack of mentors, exclusion from influential networks, and feelings of subordination and devaluation. However, the finding of this study is at odds with this prior research. There was no significant difference in the amount of relationship power of female and male public relations practitioners.

A combination of factors may account for this study's contradictory results. One factor pertains to the difference in samples of this study and those participating in the interviews and focus groups of the prior studies. This study surveyed senior-level corporate public relations practitioners who had an average of 14.41 years of experience. In contrast, Serini et al.'s (1998) focus groups were conducted with predominantly mid-level participants. Hon (1995) interviewed 34 female public relations practitioners whose positions were from mid-level to top, and they worked for a variety of organizations, including corporations, government, public relations agencies, associations, and nonprofits. Perhaps top-level corporate female public relations practitioners do not face as much discrimination as lower-level practitioners employed in other types of organizations. Or perhaps their ability to "play the networking game" is why more senior-level public relations practitioners have ascended. In short, there simply may be fewer differences in measures of relationship power between senior-level female and male public relations practitioners working in corporations.

The very different research design of this quantitative study in comparison to the qualitative studies of Hon (1995) and Serini et al. (1998) represents the second possibility for the conflicting results. In striving for generalizability, it was necessary to secure a relatively large sample for this quantitative study. This large size contributed to breadth, but not depth. It is admittedly difficult to measure a construct that is as complex as relationship power with a self-administered questionnaire. So while the survey instrument indicated no significant gender differences in relationship power, more in-depth probing with a smaller group of participants might have uncovered dynamics in exclusion or subordination not captured in the survey.

Third, the survey questionnaire did not test for the amount of effort that women put into relationship power relative to men. It is possible that female public relations practitioners compensate for their lower amount of formal structural power by working harder at forging and maintaining relationships with mentors and with members of the dominant coalition. This interpretation would fit in with the popular stereotype that women are more adept at relationship building than men. For example, some public relations practitioners may have had numerous mentors because they sought them out, whereas others might have been assigned to influential mentors based upon an existing mentor program in the organization. Similar reasoning applies to network participation and perceptions of value and support. Some employees may work diligently to integrate into and participate in important networks whereas others may be handpicked for inclusion by influential employees. Some public relations practitioners may successfully establish value and support from their relationships with members of the dominant coalition, whereas others receive a tremendous amount of value and support with little or no effort. More research is needed to test female public relations practitioners' level of involvement in these measures of relationship power. Aldoory's (1998) study on the leadership of female public relations practitioners is representative of the type of work that needs to be conducted to better understand women's degree of involvement in shaping their power.

In testing the structuralist perspective that says that individuals' influence is shaped by the overall organizational structure (Kanter, 1976, 1977), this study had predicted that female public relations practitioners would perceive having less organizational influence than men due to a lower amount of formal structural power and relationship power. Here, female public relations practitioners had a lower amount of formal structural power, but there were no significant differences in relationship power or in the perceived organizational influence of men and women. However, as claimed by feminist public relations scholars (L.A. Grunig et al., 2001; Hon, 1995; Hon et al., 1992; Serini et al., 1998) and demonstrated by this study, the organizational environment has an effect on the influence of public relations practitioners. In this study, both relationship power and formal structural power, and not gender, were moderately related to the influence of public relationships practitioners. Additionally, as indicated by the path model, women's reduced formal structural power lessens their amount of organizational influence, although not to such a degree that there are differences in influence between men and women.

The major contribution of this study is that is helps to build a feminist theory of public relations by demonstrating the importance of the organizational environment to the influence of public relations practitioners, both men and women. For some time, scholars have debated the merits of using a socialization or structuralist perspective for understanding the difficulties that some women face in ascending the managerial ladder (Cline et al., 1986; Dozier, 1988; Dozier & Broom, 1995; Hon, 1995). However, attributing women's segregation to the technician role to socialization, in effect, blames women for their difficulties (Creedon, 1991). Organizations and others working in organizations are thus absolved of responsibility. This study suggests that future research should direct its attention to the way in which organizational dynamics shape the behavior of women working in public relations practitioners.

Despite evidence of clear patterns in the relationships between both types of power, influence, and gender, it is important to discuss the limitations of this study. That all findings were based on self-report measures represents one limitation. Although the guaranteed anonymity encouraged participants to give honest evaluations, it is difficult to overcome the influence of social-desirability bias—especially those pertaining to organizational influence. Future research may want to verify public relations practitioners' level of influence through secondary sources, such as CEOs and presidents.

Second, this study did not test public relations practitioners' level of involvement in the measures of relationship power. To illustrate, some public relations practitioners may have been excluded from influential networks whereas others made successful efforts to integrate into networks.

Admittedly, this study sought to explain a rather complex phenomenon about women through survey questionnaires. Missing was the reflexivity on behalf of the researcher as well participants' lack of input that is afforded by qualitative, feminist research. On the other hand, as explained earlier, this quantitative study was successful in testing a particular component of a feminist theory of public relations. This study demonstrated that a generalizable trend exists in corporate public relations: organizational structure, not gender, impacts the perceived organizational influence of public relations practitioners. Hopefully, the findings of this study will spark further research that will continue to seek for ways to improve the lives of women working in public relations.

Additional research is needed to investigate female public relations practitioners' level of involvement in the formation and maintenance of relationship power. Because female corporate public relations practitioners have a lower amount of formal structural power, they may have to work harder than male public relations practitioners at securing quality, long-term relationships with members of the dominant coalition. Especially given the pressures of having to present a persona that is compatible with a male-dominated dominant coalition, how do female public relations practitioners cope? Although past qualitative research (L.A Grunig et al., 2001; Hon, 1992; Hon et al., 1995; Serini et al., 1998) suggests that female public relations practitioners are excluded from measures of relationship power, the results of this study suggest otherwise. In order to investigate this contradiction, interviews and participant observation should be conducted to learn about female public relations practitioners' role in creating and maintaining relationship power. To what degree are female public relations practitioners responsible for their inclusion in the influential networks of the dominant coalition? How many women initiate their own relationships with mentors? Questions such as these deserve investigation.

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Appendix

Scales and Indexes Used in Study

Employee Support

How many full-time public relations practitioners or communicators (including yourself) work in your department or location?

How many full-time employees does your organization have world-wide?

Fulfillment of a Managerial Role Subscale (Dozier et al., 1995)

I make communication policy decisions.

I take responsibility for the success or failure of my organization's public relations problems.

Because of my experience and training, others consider me the organization's expert in solving public relations problems.

I notice that others in the organization hold me accountable for the success or failure of public relations programs.

I am senior counsel to top decision makers when public relations issues are involved.

I provide decision makers with suggestions, recommendations, and plans to help them make communication policy decisions.

Place Within the Hierarchy

What is the title of the primary person you report to?

Gender Ratio of the Dominant Coalition

How many men and women are in the inner circle? Men ____ Women _____

Participation in the Networks of the Dominant Coalition Index

To what extent do you informally discuss what is going on in the organization with members of the inner circle?

How often do you informally talk about personal-related issues with members of the inner circle?

To what extent do you participate in informal social functions outside of work with members of the inner circle?

How often do you approach members of the inner circle with a work-related problem or if you want advice on a decision you have to make?

Mentor Relationships Index

How many individuals have been a mentor to you throughout your career?

Throughout your career, how many of your mentors have been part of the inner circle?

To what degree have your talents been developed through mentoring throughout your career?

Value and Support Received Index

How much does the inner circle value your public relations counsel in comparison to other employees' counsel?

How often is your opinion solicited by the inner circle?

How often do you participate in the important decision-making meetings of the inner circle?

To what extent does the inner circle consider the work that you do to be tied to the organization's success?

To what extent are you treated with respect by the inner circle?

To what extent are your values supported by the inner circle?

How supported are you in your work environment?

Table 1

Results of Factor Analysis of Public Relations Role Scale

Role Type	Factors			
Task Description	1	2	3	4
Communication Manager Role				
Because of my experience and training, others consider me the organization's expert in solving public relations problems.	.74			
I make communication policy decisions.	.81			
I take responsibility for the success or failure of my organization's public relations problems.	.77			
I notice that others in the organization hold me accountable for the success or failure of public relations programs.	.72			
Senior Adviser Role				
I am senior counsel to top decision makers when public relations issues are involved.	.83			
I provide decision makers with suggestions, recommendations, and plans to help them make communication policy decisions.	.70			
I create opportunities for management to hear the views of various internal and external publics.	.48			
I represent the organization at events and meetings.				.73
Media Relations Role				
I maintain media contacts for my organization.		.85		
I keep others in the organization informed of what the media report about our organization and important issues.		.71		
I am responsible for placing news releases.		.81		
I use my journalistic skills to figure out what the media will consider newsworthy about our organization.		.71		
Communication Technician Role				
I produce brochures, pamphlets, and other publications.			.76	
I am the person who writes communication materials.		.38	.61	
I do photography and graphics for public relations materials.			.63	

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Table 1 Continued

I edit for grammar and spelling the materials written by others in the organization.			.65	-.34
Eigenvalue	4.09	2.74	1.97	1.17
% of Variance	25.55	17.13	12.30	7.31

Note. Since only factor loadings of .32 and above are typically interpreted in factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996), factor loadings less than .32 were suppressed. Underscored loadings were accepted as representative of their respective factors.

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Table 2

Descriptive Characteristics of Sample

Variables	Total	Men	Women	t
Age				
Mean (S.D.)	46.38 (8.56)	49.01 (8.01)	43.25 (8.06)	-6.194**
Range	24-70	30-70	24-62	
Years of formal education beyond high school				
Mean (S.D.)	4.98 (1.60)	5.19 (1.64)	4.73 (1.51)	-2.507**
Range	0-14	0-14	0-13	
Number of full-time employees in world-wide organization				
Mean (S.D.)	28,957 (70,033)	29,115 (74,438)	28,770 (64,790)	-.043
Range	7-800,000	7-800,000	23-299,977	
Years of PR experience				
Mean (S.D.)	15.86 (8.64)	17.07 (9.28)	14.41 (7.6)	-2.747**
Range	0-41	2-41	0-35	
Tenure in present position				
Mean (S.D.)	6.85 (6.12)	7.51 (6.83)	6.07 (5.03)	-2.109*
Range	.2-31.8	.5-32	.2-26	

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .0$

Table 3

Comparison of Means for Men and Women on Employee Support, Fulfillment of a Managerial Role, and Gender Ratio of Dominant Coalition

Measures	Total	Men	Women	t
Number of full-time communicators in department				
Mean (S.D.)	7.95 (11.41)	8.78 (12.13)	6.97 (10.44)	-1.39
Range	1-81	1-81	1-80	
Department employees as % of organization's employees				
Mean (S.D.)	.016 (.10)	.021 (13.15)	.014 (.054)	.919
Range	0-1	0-1	0-.53	
Fulfillment of a managerial role				
Mean (S.D.)	36.41 (5.78)	36.88 (5.75)	35.87 (5.79)	-1.512
Range	12-42	12-42	19-42	
% of men in dominant coalition				
Mean (S.D.)	83.98 (15.10)	85.49 (15.22)	82.21 (14.82)	-1.88
Range	11-100	11-100	33-100	
% of women in dominant coalition				
Mean (S.D.)	16.3 (14.76)	14.9 (14.84)	17.92 (14.56)	1.76
Range	0-89	0-89	0-67	

Table 4

Comparison of Place Within the Hierarchy of Men and Women

	Frequency (Percentage)			
	Total	Men	Women	Z statistic
Group 1	104 (34)	64 (39)	40 (28)	2.05*
Group 2	156 (51)	80 (48)	76 (54)	1.05
Group 3	46 (15)	21 (13)	25 (18)	1.20

* $p < .05$

Table 5

Comparison of Z Scores of Men and Women on Measures of Formal Structural Power

Measures	Means (S.D.) Men	 Women	t
Employee support	.049 (1.273)	-.0572 (.526)	
Fulfillment of a managerial role	.059 (.991)	-.070 (1.001)	
Place within the hierarchy	.089 (.999)	-.106 (.995)	
Gender ratio of dominant coalition	.855 (.413)	-.986 (.395)	
Total Formal Structural Power	**1.018 (1.949)**	**-1.243 (1.813)**	**10.106***

* p = .000

Table 6

Comparison of Men and Women on Measures of Relationship Power

Measures	Total	Men	Women	t
Participation in the dominant coalition's networks				
Mean (S.D.)	13 (3.03)	13.25 (3.20)	12.68 (2.80)	-.77
Range	4-20	4-20	4-19	
Mentor relationships				
Mean (S.D.)	9.24 (2.56)	9.18 (2.54)	9.30 (2.58)	.394
Range	9-15		9-14 9-15	
Value and support received				
Mean (S.D.)	27.65 (5.31)	27.87 (5.38)	27.40 (5.24)	-.779
Range	8-35	8-35	10-35	

Table 7

Comparison of Z Scores of Men and Women on Measures of Relationship Power

Measures	Means (S.D.) Men	Means (S.D.) Women	t
Inclusion in the dominant coalition's networks	.086 (1.056)	-.102 (.923)	
Mentor relationships	.209 (2.076)	.329 (2.108)	
Value and support received	.041 (1.012)	-.049 (.987)	
Total Relationship Power	**.381 (3.030)**	**.246 (2.961)**	**-.371**

Figure Caption

Figure 1. A path model: Relationships among gender, power, demographic and organizational variables, and perceived organizational influence.

Measuring Public Relations Outcomes:
Community Relations and Corporate Philanthropy Programs

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Measuring Public Relations Outcomes: Community Relations and Corporate Philanthropy Programs

Introduction

The goal of this study was to evaluate the relationship-building value of the community relations and corporate philanthropy programs of a municipally-owned regional utility company (MRU).

The study built on previous MRU studies and relates particularly well to a conclusion in a report on the strategic implications of a spring 2000 customer satisfaction survey. That report noted: "While 'relationship marketing' may be a buzzword in the current marketing literature, MRU's ability to protect itself and compete in a deregulated market may well depend on how well MRU builds and reinforces the relationships it has with its current customers."

Business leaders, perhaps especially those in regulated and monitored industries such as the utility industry, must balance the immediate demands for a healthy bottom-line and for return-on-investment with the long-term bottom-line benefits of the company's being considered a neighbor-of-choice (Burke, 1999). Respected voices, most prominently represented by Milton Friedman who won the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1976, question whether corporations have any business participating in philanthropic activity at all (Friedman, 1962).

Nevertheless, just as supply, production, distribution, sales, and other factors impact the bottom-line, so, it seems to many business leaders (Levy, 1999; Weedon, 1999), do the relationships that the company builds with customers and other publics. These relationships are based on a complex interaction of the product-related factors, along with the publics' perceptions of the company's behaviors toward employees, the community, and the environment. As a result, companies often establish community relations and corporate philanthropy programs to help demonstrate their values in areas like environmental concerns and employee welfare, where publics have less first-hand knowledge of what the company is doing. Having established those programs, businesses need to measure whether they really help achieve the business goals.

This study investigated whether this utility company's community relations and corporate philanthropy helped strengthen its relationships with customers.

Literature Review

Community Relations, a Legitimate Business Activity?

Business leaders and scholars have not always seen value in establishing community relations and corporate philanthropy programs. In fact, corporate philanthropy did not have a full legal sanction until the New Jersey case of *A. P. Smith Manufacturing Company v. Barlow* (1953) overturned the requirement that corporate giving must directly benefit the corporation. Friedman's article entitled "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits" outlined the parameters of the discussion for decades (1970). Herbert Stein continued to argue this perspective, as implied by the title of his widely discussed commentary in the Wall Street Journal: "Corporate America, Mind Your Own Business" (1996). Many corporate leaders, like Albert J. Dunlap of Sunbeam, have believed that "philanthropy literally has no place in a business enterprise" (Levy, 1999, p.87).

> If you're in business, you're in business for one thing---to make money. You must do everything fiducial, legal, and moral to achieve that goal. And making excellent products that are expertly marketed is the primary way of making money.
>
> Executives who run their businesses to support social causes---such as Ben and Jerry's or The Body Shop---would never get my investment dollars. They funnel a portion of profits into things like saving whales or Greenpeace. That is not the essence of business. If you want to support a social cause, if you have other agendas, join the Rotary International. (Dunlap, 1996, p. 200).

Community Relations, an Essential Business Activity

Other business leaders and scholars propose that community relations and corporate philanthropy programs have significant impact on the company's ability to achieve its business goals.

According to E. M. Burke, there is a psychological contract, with both explicit and implicit expectations, between a company and its community (Burke, 1999). "There is a reciprocity of trust...There are recognized values that are held in common---a company needs to remain competitive and a community needs to be treated honestly and fairly---and there will be a mutual attempt to make each other successful in achieving these goals" (p. 5). Communities include "shadow constituencies" that can overturn agreements a company has made with the power elite, as evidenced by Disney's attempts to create a historical theme park in the Manassas Virginia region (Burke, 1999, p. 78-79). To become a neighbor of choice in the community, Burke says a company must:

> Build sustainable and ongoing relationships with key community individuals, groups, and organizations
>
> Institute practices and procedures that anticipate and respond to community expectations, concerns, and issues
>
> Focus the community support programs to build relationships, respond to community concerns, and strengthen the community's quality of life (Burke, 1999, p.28).

William Norris, the founder of Control Data, hired many minorities in the late 1960s to help address concerns that were causing a particularly high level of social unrest. He is quoted as saying "You can't do business in a society that's burning" (Weedon, 1999, p. 13). Kenneth Dayton of Dayton Hudson endorsed a goal of every company giving five percent of its pretax profits in corporate philanthropy. He joined with other corporate leaders in Minneapolis and St. Paul to form the Five Percent Club. John D. Rockefeller III is reported to have said at a Chamber of Commerce meeting in the late 1970s: "I heard so much about the City of Minneapolis, about its Chamber of Commerce, about the public spirit of its business community, about your remarkable Five Percent Club---that I feel a bit like Dorothy in the Land of Oz. I had to come to the Emerald City myself to see if it really exists" (Galaskiewicz, 1997, p. 445). In the late 1980s Dayton Hudson and another member of the Five Percent Club were threatened with hostile takeovers. Community members, nonprofit leaders, and the media supported Dayton Hudson's request for new legislation to help avert the takeovers. "In response...the Minnesota legislature held hearings and passed legislation favorable to maintaining local ownership. In both cases the companies charitable contributions, and the relatively uncharitable track records of their pursuers, were major topics of discussion and dread" (Pratt, 1999, p. 305).

Community Relations, a Relationship-Building Activity

Recipients and donors in philanthropic relationships each bring power based on their mutually beneficial social exchange (Ostrander & Schervish, 1990). "Corporate giving is...seen not solely as philanthropy but rather as an established part of doing business, being present in the community, and acting in the corporation's own self-interest" (Harvey & McCrohan, 1990, p.59). A study by Wokutch & Spencer (1987) that showed "that perceptions of corporate social responsibility are higher for firms with greater levels of giving, even for those that had earlier violated the antitrust statutes (Harvey & McCrohan, 1990, p. 59).

Following on the call for relationships to be considered as the central unit of public relations study (Ferguson, 1984), scholarship moved toward this approach (Bruning, 1999; Bruning & Ledingham, 2000; Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2000; Ledingham & Bruning, 2000; Lindenmann, 1998-99). The Excellence Study by J. E. Grunig and his colleagues determined empirically that public relations contributes to an organization's effectiveness by helping to reconcile its expectations with those of its stakeholders. "It does so through the development and maintenance of high-quality, long-term relationships with the publics most in a position to support or to interfere with the organization" (Grunig, 1997, p. 288). Since community relations is the public relations function that focuses primarily on community-based stakeholders, the relationships it builds and maintains ought to enhance the effectiveness of the company.

To demonstrate that community relations and corporate philanthropy programs build relationships with stakeholders, the concept of relationship needs to be clear. Yet, the concept of relationship is complex. Relationships have antecedents and consequences (Grunig & Huang, 2000). Broom, Casey, and Ritchey discuss a theoretical framework for the concept of relationship by reviewing perspectives from scholars of interpersonal communication, psychotherapy, interorganizational relationships, and systems theory. They conclude that "conceptualizing organization-public relationships as observable phenomena distinct from their antecedents and consequences, and independent of the parties in the relationship, provides a useful paradigm for research and for theory building" (1997, p. 20).

Scholars have discussed attributes of relationships including reciprocity, trust, credibility, mutual legitimacy, openness, mutual satisfaction, mutual understanding, involvement, investment, control mutuality, and commitment (Grunig & Huang, 2000; Grunig, Grunig, & Ehling, 1992; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998). Additionally they have described relationships types, particularly communal and exchange (Clark & Mills, 1993; Hon & Grunig, 1999). And, they have suggested ways to measure relationships (Bruning, 1999; Hon & Grunig, 1999).

Research Questions

Based on the literature, five research questions arose:

R1 How strong is the relationship between Municipal Regional Utilities and its customers?

R2 Is the relationship stronger with some categories of customers than others?

R3 Are customers aware of MRU's community relations and corporate philanthropy programs?

R4 Which community relations programs and corporate philanthropy programs do customers value?

R5 Do community relations and corporate philanthropy programs strengthen the relationship between MRU and its customers?

Methodology

A questionnaire was designed based on the *Guidelines for Measuring Relationships in Public Relations* (Hon & Grunig, 1999). The questionnaire measured four indicators of the strength of MRU's relationship with its customers:

- ✓ Trust,
- ✓ Mutuality of control,
- ✓ Commitment, and
- ✓ Satisfaction.

The "trust" questions asked if the customers thought the company treated them fairly, can be relied on to do what it says, and has the skills to provide quality services. The questions about "mutuality of control" asked if the customers believe that MRU listens to their concerns about things like service and environmental issues. The "commitment" questions asked if the customers believe that MRU is committed to doing business with people like them. The "satisfaction" questions ask customers whether their business relationship with MRU is generally satisfactory and beneficial to both them and the company.

The study also measured the types of relationship that MRU has with its customers:

- ✓ Communal, and
- ✓ Exchange

The "exchange" questions measured whether customers perceive MRU as profit motivated. It would be important for them to understand that MRU needs profits to continue in business. The "communal" questions asked if customers perceive that MRU is motivated by the overall well-being of community. Successful long-term relationships with customers might require that they perceive a combination of communal and exchange motivations, with communal being somewhat higher.

Items relating to these six relationship factors were based closely on the shorter version of the Hon and Grunig (1999) items, with adjustments being made to fit the particularly situation of this company and its customers. The items used a scale from 1 to 9, where 1 meant, "strongly disagree" and 9 meant, "strongly agree." Customers responded to several items about each factor.

They were also asked whether they knew of any community benefits or programs that MRU provides in addition to providing utility services. Demographic data and information about what services the customers receive were also gathered.

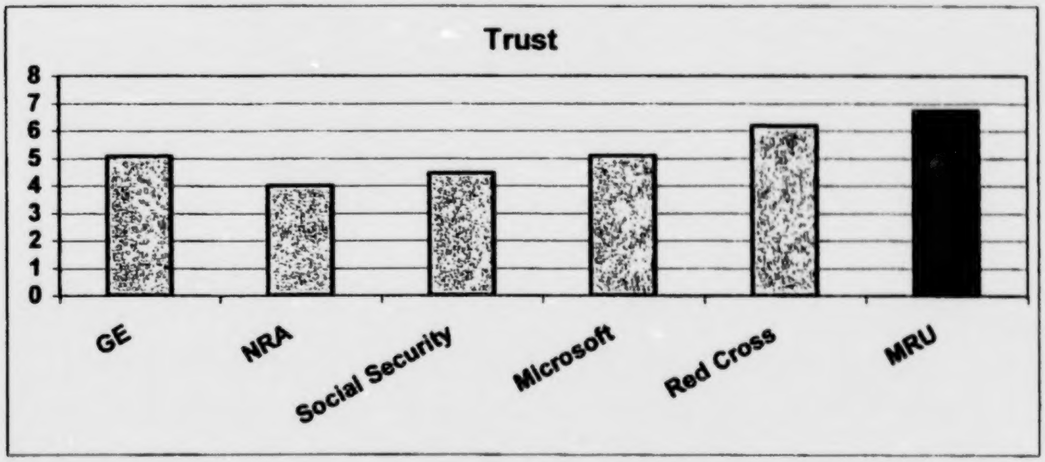
The Florida Survey Research Center administered the survey by telephone, first pre-testing the items and after minor changes for clarity, completing interviews in 401 customer households in August and September 2001. The Center also assisted with statistical analysis.

Results

R1: How strong is the relationship between MRU and its customers?

The means of responses on the relationship factors indicate that MRU has a relatively strong relationship with customers and that the relationship has both exchange and communal characteristics. To provide context, the MRU responses are shown beside preliminary data on General Electric, the National Rifle Association, the Social Security Administration, Microsoft, and the Red Cross as reported by Hon and Grunig (1999). Those data were gathered by placing a questionnaire on the internet and inviting people from randomly chosen email addresses to respond. The respondents were not necessarily customers or other targeted publics of the organizations, meaning that the data are not directly comparable to the MRU data in this study. Nevertheless, they do provide a helpful backdrop for the MRU data.

As the graph below shows, on the "trust" factor, MRU is higher than the other five organizations. It is closest to the "pre-September 11" American Red Cross.



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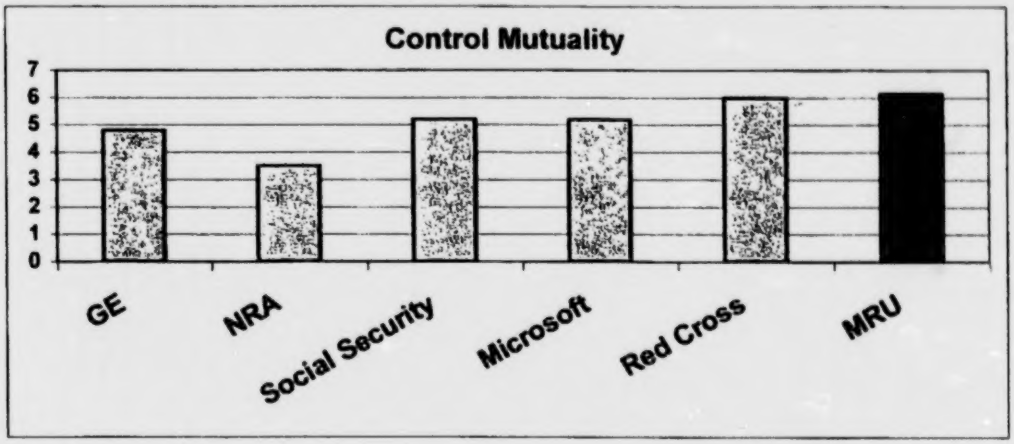
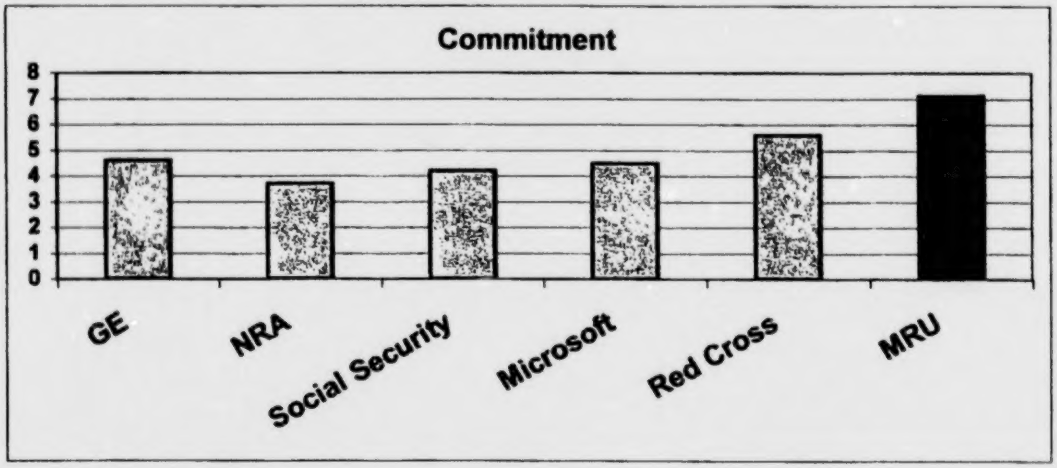
On the "mutuality of control" factor, MRU is higher than four of the five and about equal to the Red Cross.



On the "commitment" factor, MRU is again high.



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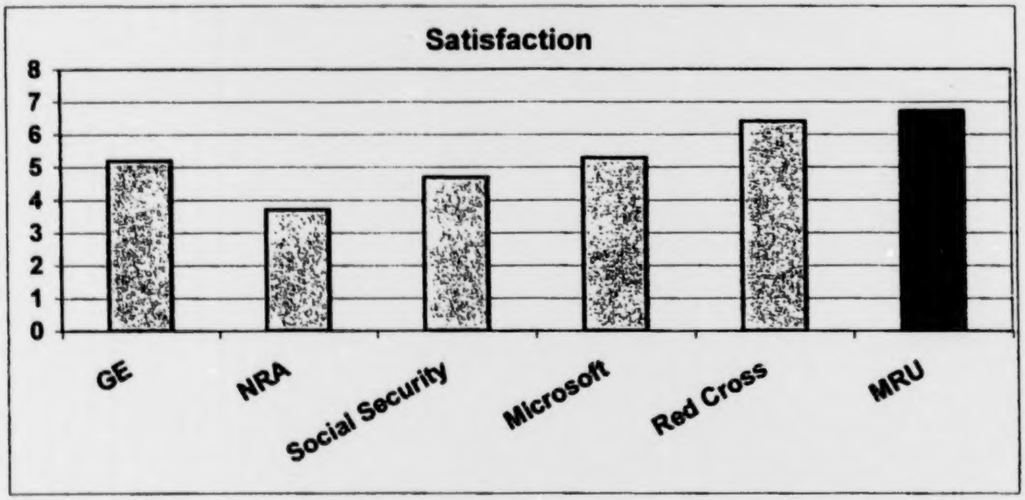
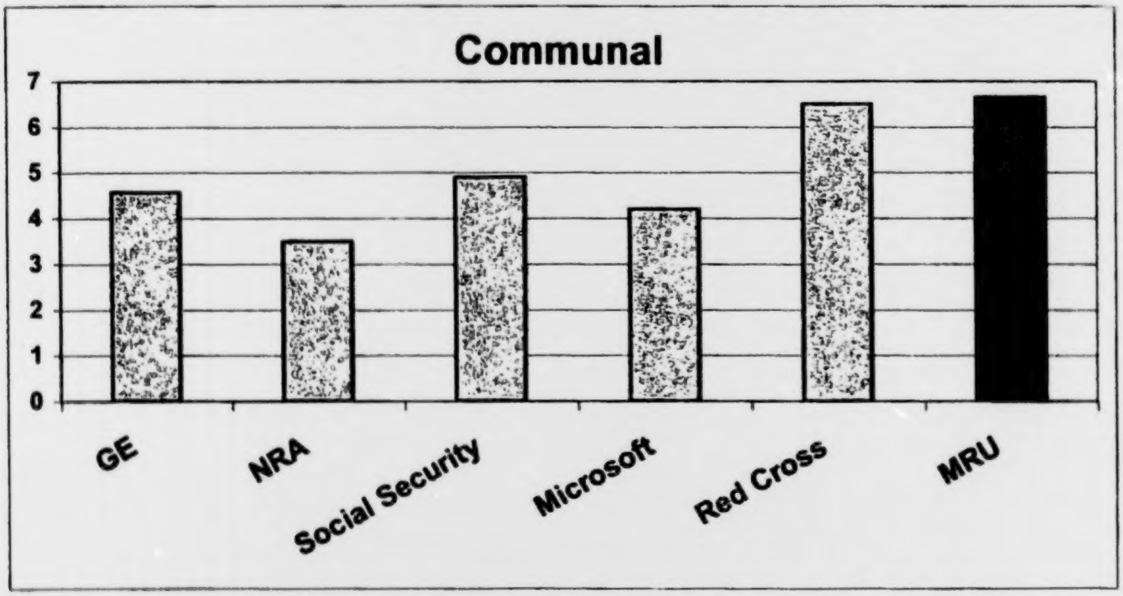
On the "satisfaction" factor, MRU is has the highest mean scores and is closest to the Red Cross.



The "communal" factor indicates the degree to which the respondents perceive that organization is community-motivated. This factor implies that the organization does not expect an immediate, equal exchange for its contributions toward community well-being. MRU's mean scores are about the same as those of the Red Cross.



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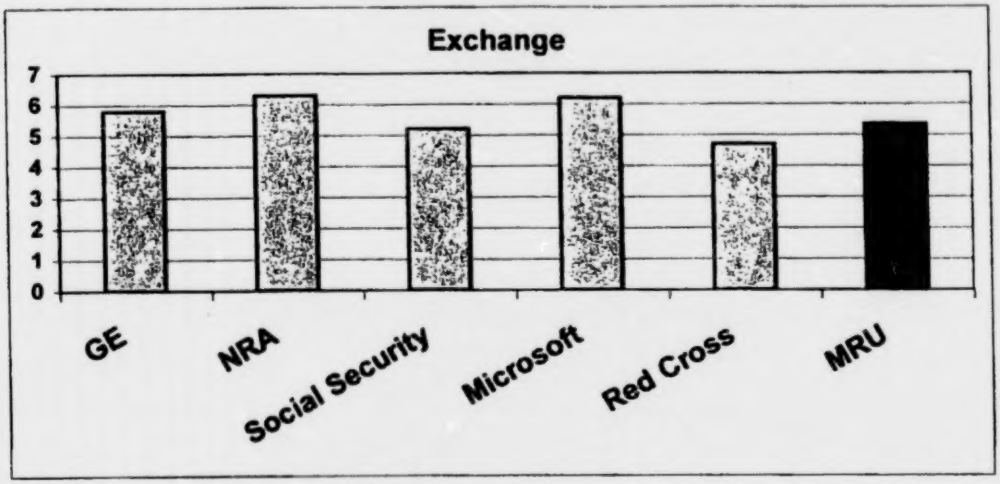
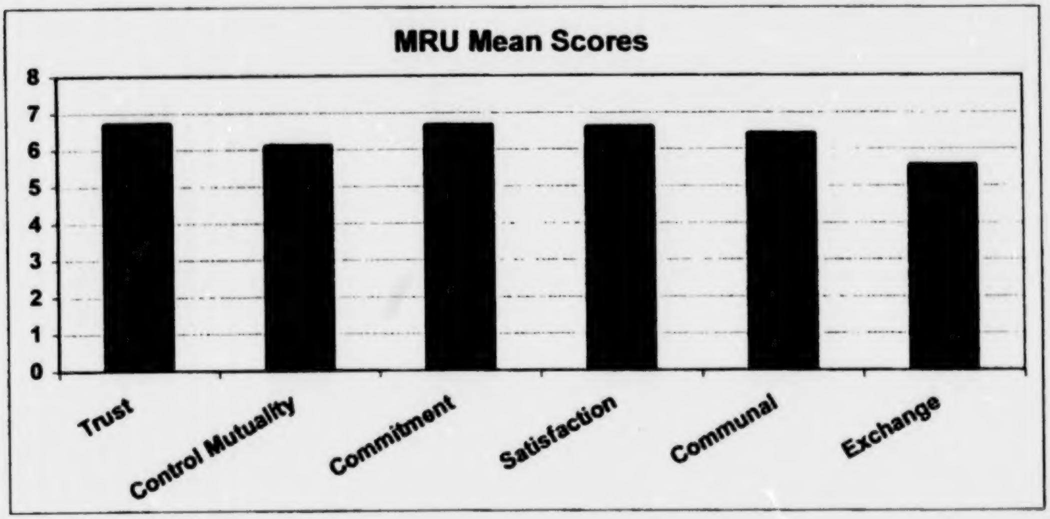
On the "exchange" factor, MRU's mean score is lower than the publicly-held companies and NRA and a little higher than the Social Security Administration and the Red Cross. This would indicate that MRU is recognized as a company that needs to make a profit but that it is less profit-motivated than the for-profit comparison companies or the NRA.



As the graph below shows, overall MRU's relationship with its customers is strong.



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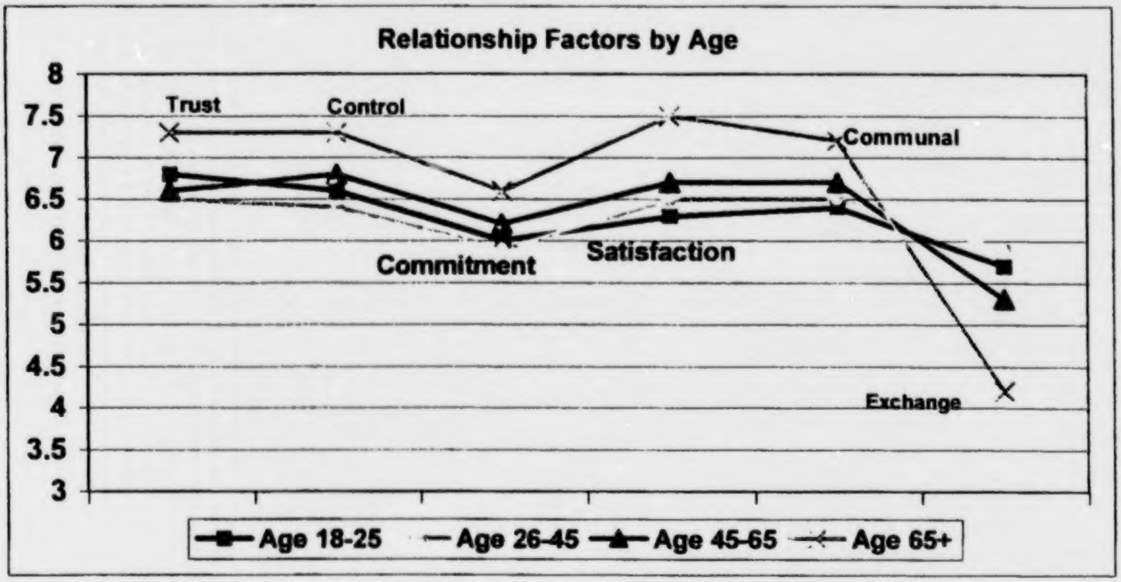
R2: Is the relationship stronger with some categories of customers than others?

The study collected data on gender, age, zip codes, length of time the respondent has been an MRU customer, employment status, race, and whether the customer has children at home. Most of the segmentations did not yield statistically significant differences among customer groups.

However, respondents older than 65 have the most favorable mean scores on the relationship factors. As seen below, they rate MRU higher on trust, mutuality of control, commitment, and satisfaction. They believe MRU is more community-motivated and less profit-motivated. Using chi-square tests, the differences are statistically significant at .05 level on the trust, commitment, and communal factors, and at the .01 level on the satisfaction and exchange factors. The difference on the mutuality of control factor is not statistically significant.



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R3: Are customers aware of MRU's community relations and corporate philanthropy programs?

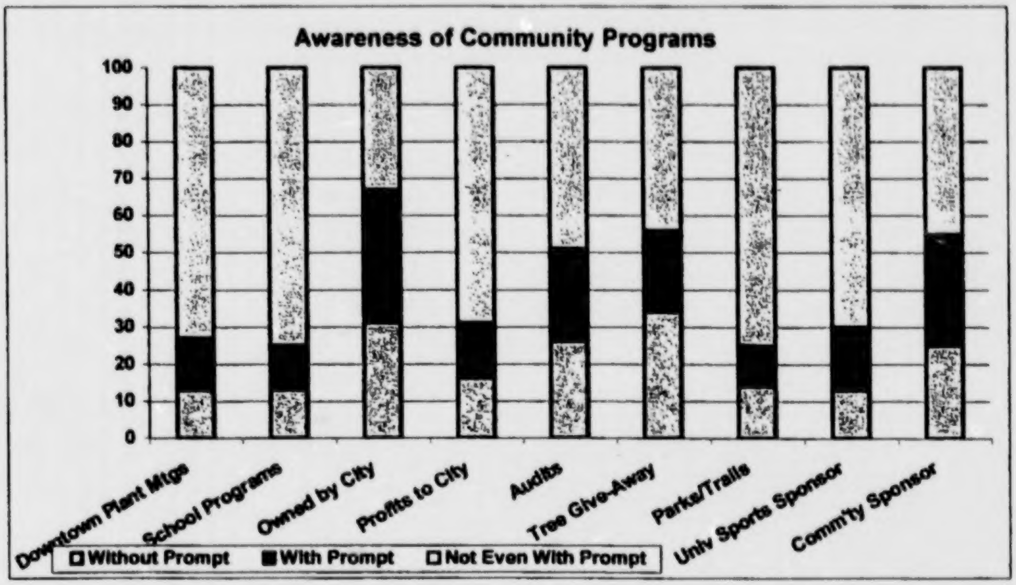
The study measured customers' awareness of specific MRU community relations and corporate philanthropy programs. More than 20 percent of customers are aware, without being prompted, and more than 50 percent were aware with prompting, that MRU:

- ✓ Is owned by the city,
- ✓ Provides energy and water audits,
- ✓ Gives away trees to build the canopy, and
- ✓ Sponsors community fund-raising events such as the March of Dimes Walkathon.

With prompting, more than 20 percent of the customers were also aware that MRU:

- ✓ Held community meetings before the downtown plant expansion,
- ✓ Provides education programs, such as adopting a school,
- ✓ Returns profits to the city,
- ✓ Provides parks and trails, and
- ✓ Is the Official Energy Sponsor of the local university sports teams.

The following graph shows the percent of awareness of various community relations and corporate philanthropy programs.



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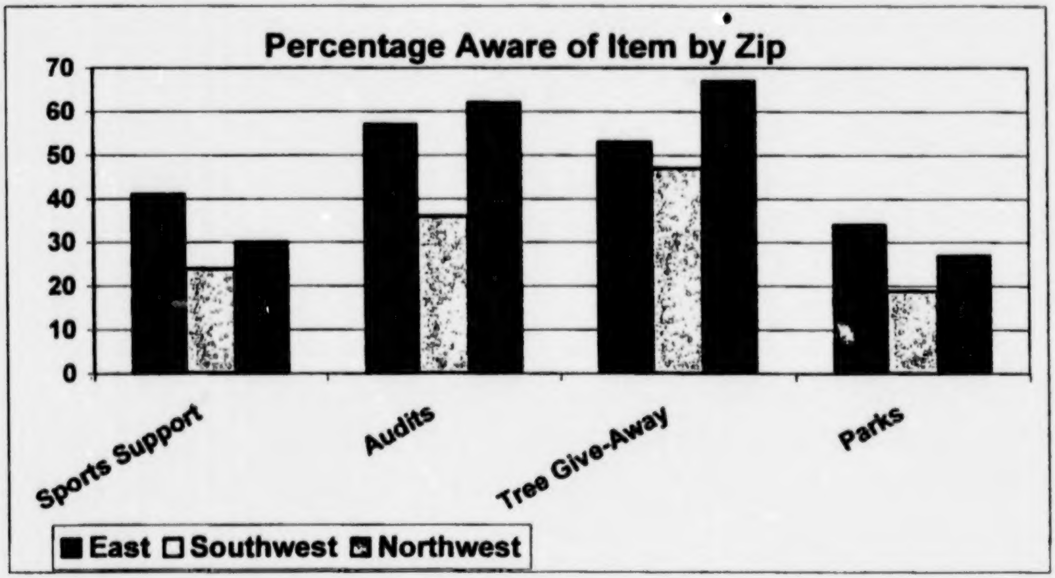
The demographic groups yield a few interesting and statistically significant differences in awareness of community relations and corporate philanthropy programs. Customers on the east side of the city, which has lower income areas, are more aware that MRU is the Official Energy Sponsor of the university sports teams than are customers in southwest, a mixed income area, or northwest, a more uniformly medium to higher income area. They are also more aware that MRU has built parks and trails. Those in the northwest area are most aware that MRU provides energy and water audits and that it holds an annual tree give-away. The chart below shows the areas in which zip code differences are statistically significant at least at the .05 level.



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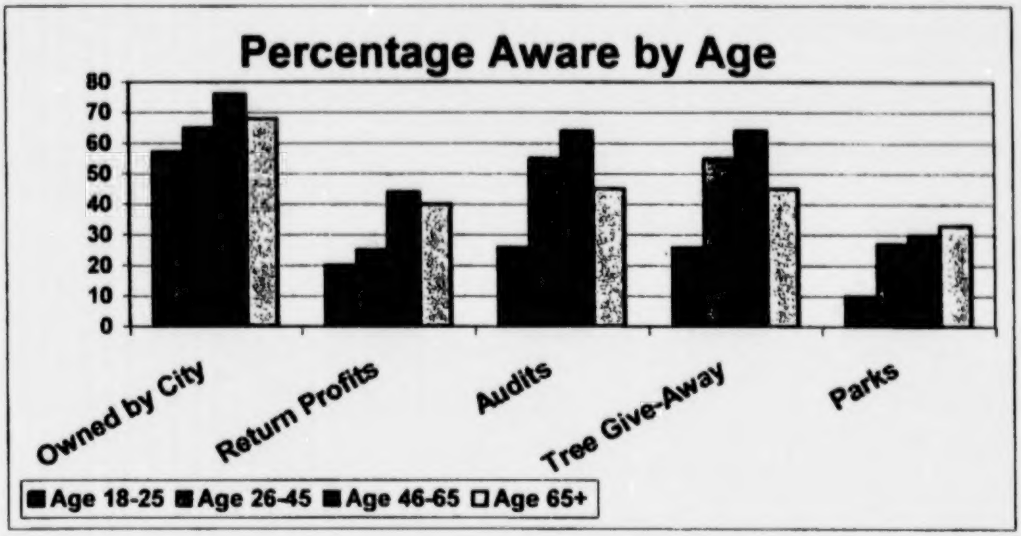
Age is also factor in awareness of the community relations and corporate philanthropy programs. The youngest customers are the least aware of all community relations and corporate philanthropy programs. Those under 45 are much less aware that MRU returns profits to the city than are those over 45. Customers between 45 and 65 are the most aware MRU is owned by the city. The graph below shows the areas in which the age differences are statistically significant. "Owned by the city" is significant at the .05 level and the others at the .01 level.



A few other group differences stand out and seem to have management implications.

- ✓ White customers are significantly more aware than Black customers or those of other ethnic groups, that MRU returns profits to the city (.01 level) and that it holds a tree give-away (.05 level.)
- ✓ Women customers are significantly more aware than men of MRU's support for education, 30 percent versus 17 percent (.01 level.)
- ✓ Men are significantly more aware than women of MRU's returning profits to the city, 41 percent versus 26 percent (.01 level.)

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R4: Which community relations programs and corporate philanthropy programs do customers value?

The table that follows recaps the percentage of respondents that are aware of specific programs, as it was shown on the graph on page 9. It also shows how important each program is to those customers.

Specific Program	% Aware of Program	How Important to Those Who Aware		
		Not	Somewhat	Very
Community meetings re plant expansion	27	13	23	64
Education programs, like adopting a school	25	0	15	85
Owned by the City	67	16	33	51
Return profits to city	31	7	19	74
Energy/water audits	51	5	25	71
Tree give-away	56	8	21	71
Parks and trails	25	4	26	70
Official Energy Sponsor Univ Sports	30	13	24	64
Sponsor community fund-raising events	55	7	23	70

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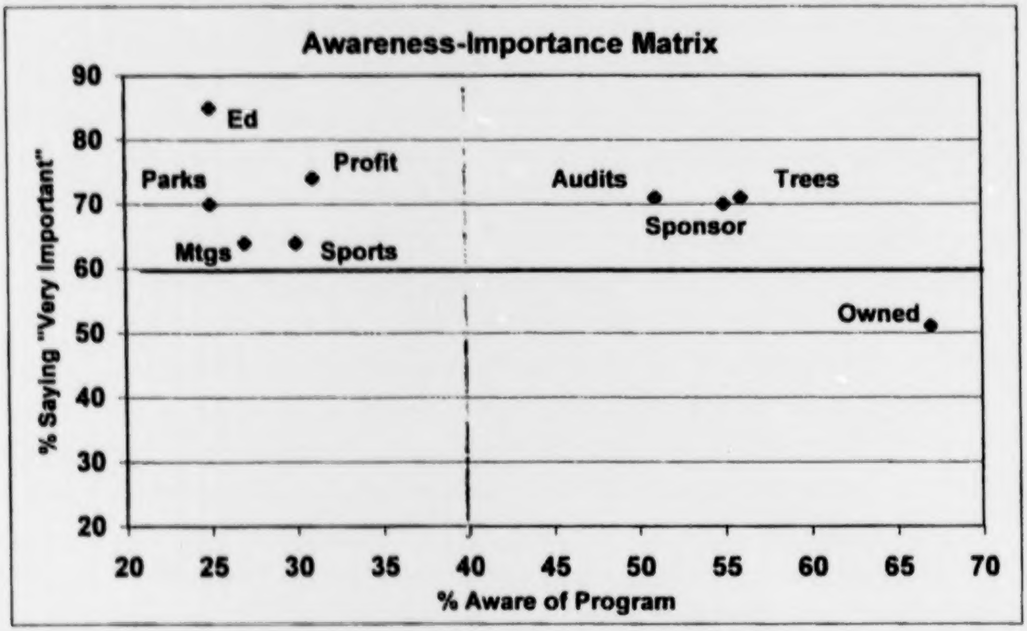
The following graph shows the percentage of customers who are aware of each program and the percentage of those customers who say the program is "very important" to them. The mean score on "awareness" is 40 percent. The mean score on "very important" is 60 percent. Lines are added at the means of the "awareness" axis and the "importance" axis to create four quadrants:

- Low-Awareness/High-Importance
- Low-Awareness/Low-Importance
- High-Awareness/High-Importance
- High-Awareness/Low Importance



Legend:
Ed=Sponsors education programs, like adopt-a-school
Parks=Supports parks and trails
Sports=Official energy sponsors of local university sports teams
Profits=Returns profits to the city
Mtgs=Holds community meetings before major decisions are made, like the Kelly Plant
Audits=Energy and water audits
Sponsor=Sponsors community fund-raising events, like the March of Dimes Walkathon
Owned=Owned by the city

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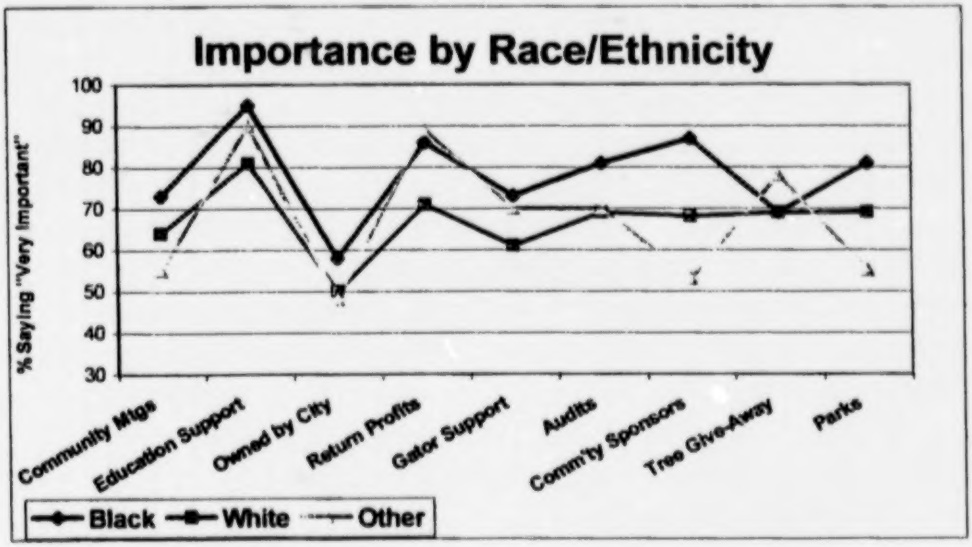
The demographic categories indicate that programs are valued differently by customer groups. Black customers, more often than other groups, consider community relations and corporate philanthropy programs to be "very important." The number of Black customers who said MRU's sponsorship of community fund-raising activities is "very important" is statistically significant at the .05 level compared to the other groups.

Hispanic, Asian and other ethnic groups (all included in "other") particularly value the fact that MRU returns profits to the city. The following graph shows these demographic differences.



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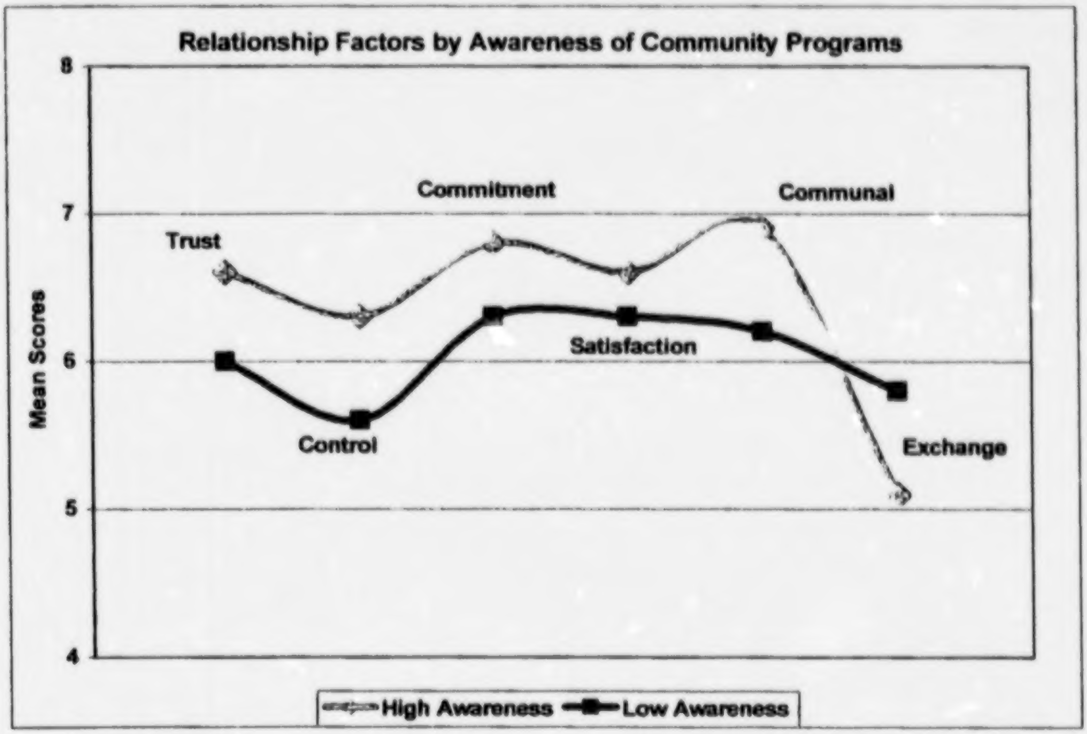
R5: Do community relations and corporate philanthropy programs strengthen the relationship between MRU and its customers?

Customers who are aware of MRU's community relations and corporate philanthropy programs, have higher mean scores on the trust, mutuality of control, commitment, satisfaction, and communal factors. They also have a lower mean score on the exchange factor. On all except the satisfaction factor the difference is statistically significant at the .01 level. The results indicate that the community relations and corporate philanthropy programs do contribute significantly to the relationship between the company and its customers.



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Discussion

The study indicates that it is valid to value community relations and corporate philanthropy as legitimate business functions. The data support the contention that community relations and corporate philanthropy build relationships with customers. Customers with greater awareness of the company's community relations and corporate giving programs rated MRU higher on trust, mutuality of control, commitment, and communal factors, and lower on the profit-motivated exchange factor, as the company would want. It is not surprising that the sixth factor tested, satisfaction, would be less related to community relations and corporate philanthropy than the other factors. Even extraordinary support for the community would be unlikely to overcome any customer dissatisfaction with their individual utility service.

The ratings are a strong indicator that these programs are achieving their desired outcome and helping the company build relationships that may be important as deregulation of the industry increases competition.

The data from this study indicate awareness of community relations and corporate philanthropy programs does strengthen the company-customer relationship. It is therefore likely that it is more important than previously thought to expand the number of customers who are know about these company's programs. The demographic data provide cues for public relations programming that would target the community relations and corporate philanthropy programs themselves, as well as programs to expand knowledge about community relations and corporate philanthropy to the customer segments that most highly value specific programs and are least aware of them. Even small increases in the level of knowledge about programs could reap useful relationship results.

Limitations and Further Study

This study is limited by its focus on a single company. It also was unable to include all of the items from the longer version of the Hon and Grunig (1999) study.

The managers of MRU were eager for their company to participate in this study. They had completed simple customer satisfaction surveys in the past, and have an on-going program of research often using focus groups to measure customer satisfaction, test new product or program ideas. They saw the idea of relationship measurement as an expansion of both the depth and breadth of their earlier research and found the trust, mutuality of control, commitment, and satisfaction factors to add new dimensions to their thinking about the company's interaction with customers.

On the other hand, they found the distinction between exchange and communal relationships to be elusive in the business mindset. In "communal" relationships the organization and its stakeholders contribute to each other's well-being because they each want the other to thrive, regardless of any immediate return to them. The company contribution side of the concept fit well with the community relations and corporate philanthropy programs that were discussed in the study. But there was less attention to any support that the customers might give the company to see it thrive. One question asked about likelihood to switch to a different service provider if given a discount price. A future study might give more attention to customer loyalty as an additional measure of this communal concept, and to elucidate the link between relationship and loyalty.

Conclusion

MRU is building strong relationships with customers. The relationships appear to result from good business practices, including community relations and corporate philanthropy programs. The data indicate that some of those programs are very important to customers and that many customers are unaware that MRU is doing them. To maintain and enhance the relationship with customers MRU should continue its community relations and corporate philanthropy, increasing public relations and advertising programs that inform targeted groups of customers about the programs that are most often rated "very important" by the group and increasing the availability to targeted groups of customers of participative programs they consider "very important."

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Journalists' Hostility Toward Public Relations:
A Historical Analysis

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Journalists' Hostility Toward Public Relations:
A Historical Analysis

Abstract

Journalists seem to treat public relations and its practitioners with contempt. However, no studies have investigated the problem's historic roots. Thus, this paper explores the perspective of "early insiders" through a historical analysis of autobiographies, biographies, and magazine articles written by and about early U.S. newspaper reporters and editors. Results revealed six interrelated factors that contributed to the origins, persistence, and contradictions surrounding the hostility. The paper concludes with practical implications and future research directions.

Journalists' Hostility Toward Public Relations: A Historical Analysis

Introduction

Journalists seem to treat public relations and its practitioners with contempt. The negativity currently permeates journalism and is frequently reflected in verbal comments and in printed articles throughout the profession and in academia. For example, in a recent news industry publication, an editor of *The Charlotte Observer* wrote the following regarding PR practitioners: "it's their job to call you about their client, but you don't have to waste your time listening to them; just be polite about it" and "often the stuff they send goes directly into the waste basket"[1]. This attitude is puzzling since journalists depend on PR practitioners for information and midway through their careers often accept jobs in public relations. For years, journalists have charged that PR practitioners are unethical, manipulative, one-sided, and deceptive. They also complain that PR practitioners serve special interests rather than the public.[2] PR practitioners respond that journalists have a narrow and self-righteous view of their work and know little about public relations, a profession in which ethical conduct is important.[3]

Although the animosity between journalists and PR practitioners has been longstanding, important questions remain unanswered. A review of the academic literature reveals that while some scholars have examined the current relationship between journalists and PR practitioners, there have been no studies (to our knowledge) that have uncovered the problem's historic roots specifically from the views of "journalism's early insiders" (those individuals who have spent much of their professional lives in news reporting or editing). As noted by Berg, "historical analysis of social knowledge, traditions, and conditions can increase appreciation and understanding of contemporary issues"[4]. We believe that gaining insights into journalists' hostility toward PR from the perspective of "early insiders" will assist today's journalists and PR practitioners in better understanding how and why certain prejudices and stereotypes arose. These insights may, in turn, help today's practitioners correct these prejudices and stereotypes either by changing their behavior or by trying to change mistaken attitudes. Thus, the purpose of our paper is to explore the following research questions: (1) What are the origins of journalists' hostility towards public relations from the perspective of "early insiders"? (2) Why has this hostile attitude persisted? (3) Why is the relationship between journalists and practitioners riddled with stereotypes and contradictions?

Review of the Literature

Prior academic work has found that the hostility between journalists and PR practitioners began at the end of World War I, when the newspaper industry started a campaign against "spacegrabbers" (primarily press agents). Journalists feared that publicists' efforts to obtain free publicity would reduce newspapers' advertising revenue. Trade journals lead the battle, urging journalists to discard publicists' handouts.[5] Research by Stegall and Sanders revealed that misunderstandings and stereotypes arose as journalists and PR practitioners tried to define their roles, causing their relationship to become an adversarial one. For instance, reporters often dismissed public relations as "flackery," while many PR practitioners began to view journalists, "as incompetent bunglers who quote out of context and sensationalize the negative."[6] As noted by Kopenhaver, Martinson, and Ryan, hostility between the two groups hurt the public. They explain:

> A journalist who will not use information from a public relations person because he or she does not trust *any* practitioner may miss out on some good stories or include incomplete, unclear, or inaccurate information in articles. A practitioner who finds he or she is not trusted simply because of the position he or she holds will find it harder to do a job and may feel forced to use unethical means to get a message to the public. Neither situation benefits the news media, public relations, or society.[7]

Research on the Current Relationship

In a study on the current relationship between journalists and PR practitioners, Sallot, Steinfatt, and Salwen found that journalists and PR practitioners seemed to perceive the worst in each other, but that some differences were based on fact. "In an effort to gain ink and air time," Sallot, Steinfatt, and Salwen explained, "practitioners continually offer journalists unsolicited assistance in the performance of their jobs. With good reason, journalists perceive that practitioners have self-serving motives for offering this 'service.'" Still, these researchers concluded that both journalists and PR practitioners are professionals with similar news values and that both, in their own ways, serve beneficial social roles.[8]

Other scholars have documented current journalists' dependence on PR practitioners. Turk, for example, found that newspapers were more likely to use than discard the information provided by PR practitioners. Specifically, the newspapers examined in this study used 51% of the news releases distributed by six state agencies, resulting in 183 news stories, or 48% of all the stories published about the agencies.[9] Several other investigations have found that many current PR practitioners were actually former journalists -- a fact that may help explain journalists' and PR practitioners' shared values (and the practitioners' success in placing stories).

Research on Current Trends

Work by Weaver and Wilhoit revealed that compared to the total U.S. labor force, journalists were, "disproportionately clustered in the 25-to-34-year-old age bracket...offering some support for the oft-cited observation that journalism tends to be a younger person's occupation." The number of journalists 45 and older was considerably lower than average, suggesting that many journalists left the field in their forties to pursue other occupations.[10]

Clearly, many moved to public relations. For instance, a study by Nayman, McKee, and Lattimore found that nearly two-thirds of the PR practitioners in the Denver area were former journalists and that half the area's current journalists said they might someday enter the field of public relations.[11] Similarly, Fedler, Buhr, and Taylor found that 45% of Central Florida's former journalists turned to community or public relations, 6% to marketing, and 6% to advertising. Furthermore, the former journalists preferred their new jobs on 19 of 20 variables including freedom, variety, security, challenge, autonomy, and personal satisfaction. The primary advantages were better working conditions and salaries. Overall, former journalists experienced less pressure in their new jobs and enjoyed more opportunities to help people, be creative, advance, experience feelings of achievement, and influence importance decisions.[12]

The move from newsrooms to public relations seems certain to continue and possibly even to accelerate due, in part, to declining newsroom morale. Repeated surveys have found that today's journalists are burned out, fed-up, and pissed-off.[13] Journalists have always complained about their stress, poor pay, and long hours, but they also dislike current trends in the newspaper industry including stagnant readership; growing domination of large, publicly traded companies; and efforts to cut costs, staffs, and news holes.[14] In fact, a study by Pease found that 46% of the nation's journalists would not want their children to pursue careers in the newspaper industry. Although many journalists cited traditional concerns, some feared that newspapers were becoming obsolete.[15] Similarly, research by the American Society of Newspaper Editors recently revealed that only 46% of the nation's reporters and editors planned to remain in the industry.[16]

Method

The goals of our study required historical research. In sum, "historical research attempts to systematically recapture the complex nuances, the people, meanings, events, and even ideas of the past that have influenced and shaped the present"[17]. As part of a larger project, the historical analysis reported here involved a comprehensive, detailed, and close examination of multiple data sources including 148 autobiographies, 91 biographies, and approximately 250 magazine articles written by and about early U.S. newspaper reporters and editors. These data sources were selected because they are "preserved" and thus provide the opportunity to study people who no longer exist to be observed or interviewed[18]. Additionally, these sources not only document specific events in these journalists' careers but also record their introspective reflections about experiencing these events[19]. An effort was made to gather as much relevant source material as possible[20].

Many of the books in this study are described in annotated bibliographies devoted to journalism.[21] The magazine articles examined include those that were written for an audience of fellow journalists (i.e., published in trade magazines such as *The Writer* and *The Journalist*) as well as those that were written for the general public (i.e., published in consumer magazines listed in *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature* and *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*[*][1]).

Across data sources, our sample includes journalists who worked during the late 1800s (when public relations was emerging as a field) and journalists who worked during the first half of the twentieth century (when public relations was developing into a recognized profession). Appendix A identifies and provides background characteristics for a portion of our sample of journalism's insiders -- the newspaper editors and newspaper reporters quoted in this paper, especially the authors and the subjects of books.

The sample was combined and analyzed as a whole. The analysis process involved carefully evaluating the authenticity of the sources; intense reading and immersion in the materials; and interpreting, categorizing, and synthesizing the data while searching for patterns and themes pertaining to our three research questions[22].

Results

Analysis identified six interrelated factors that contributed to the origins of journalists' hostility toward public relations, the persistence of this negative attitude, and contradictions surrounding the relationship. These interrelated factors are: (1) hunger for publicity, (2) situational context of publicity's origins, (3) methods of early PR practitioners, (4) early journalists' criticisms, (5) journalists' own problems, and (6) journalists' goals and ultimate fate. Each factor will be discussed in turn supported by illustrative examples and quotations from the perspectives and voices (words) of "journalism's early insiders" themselves.

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[*] Books written by and about early journalists and PR practitioners use words that, today, are considered sexist: "*newsman,*" "*newspaperman,*" and "*public relations man,*" for example. Other early titles also end in the words "*boy*" and "*man.*" This paper never changes those words, nor other male nouns and pronouns, when they appear in direct quotations. Elsewhere, this paper uses non-sexist and more modern terms, especially "*reporter,*" "*journalist,*" "*publicist,*" and "*PR practitioner.*"

(1) Hunger for Publicity

Some Americans have always sought publicity and journalists generally considered them pests.[23] For example, in 1880 Congdon complained that everyone wanted to use his newspaper to print the smallest details of their lives from the birth of their first child to the size of their biggest pumpkin. In his view, the worst offenders were actors, authors, and politicians, "together with all men who have bees in their bonnets."[24]

Although many Americans accused newspapers of intruding upon the sanctity of private life, many of the very same people complained when newspapers failed to report in detail their weddings, parties, dress, and other personal matters. According to Warner, every editor experienced a constant pressure to print, "much more of such private matters than his judgment and taste permit or approve."[25] In 1884, *The Journalist* concluded that reporters encountered two groups of people: one that tried to suppress information and the other that encouraged its publication. Sometimes the people seeking publicity invaded newspapers offices in an effort to advertise themselves and to lobby for causes they favored. For example, unwelcome visitors evaded barriers that were erected to protect Horace Greeley[26] and interrupted his work. Newspaper editors in big cities throughout the United States experienced similar problems.[27]

During the twentieth century newsroom visitors became even more common. According to Beaman, the 1920s and 1930s were an era of goldfish eaters and flagpole sitters, "with other crack-brained individuals hopping from state to state on pogo sticks just to get their pictures in the paper."[28] Newspaper offices became, "the constant prey of all sorts and kinds of publicity stunts." Editors recognized most of the stunts but were occasionally fooled "by these seekers after the golden fleece of free publicity."[29] On the whole, journalists resisted the efforts of the hordes of lobbyists, toadies, and publicity-seekers trying to invade newsrooms.[30] Even gangsters submitted news releases.[31]

(2) Situational Context of Publicity's Origins

It is difficult to determine when public relations became a recognized industry. Although some historians believe that the discipline emerged after World War I, journalists encountered publicists before the Civil War. Washington Irving staged one of the field's first field stunts in 1809. In the 1830s, P.T. Barnum was a master of ballyhoo and people in business, politics, religion, and education copied his techniques. Circuses and theaters in particular lacked large budgets and found that publicists helped minimize their cost of advertising. By the 1880s, the use of publicists expanded to include hotels, professional sports, railroads, and steamboat lines. Reporters who were poorly paid and overworked, generally welcomed publicists' flattery and favors, especially the free passes to their attractions. Moreover, the prospect of lucrative jobs in publicity gave reporters something to anticipate. Editors also benefited from the publicists' appearance. With limited staffs and growing news holes, they welcomed well-written handouts, provided they had some news value.[32]

"The press agent grew out of the old advance agent of the circus or traveling theatrical company."[33] According to Kent Cooper, an executive with The Associated Press, everyone who worked for newspapers recalled the circus press agents. The agents talked in extravagant adjectives while submitting extravagantly worded copy about the "greatest show on earth" and carried pockets full of free passes. Editors used the publicists' stories because the public was indeed interested in circuses. Cooper stated, "what the press agent has to tell about his circus is news, and his utterances are usually interesting, even if exaggerated."[34] Julian Ralph, a reporter for the *New York Sun*, recalled first encountering a large publicity apparatus while covering a world's fair in 1893. He said the fair's publicists flooded journalists with glowing material.[35] Seven years later, three former journalists established the first independent public relations firm in Boston.[36] Other men and women then started similar agencies or added publicity departments to existing advertising agencies.[37]

Some observers insist that the public relations industry arose between 1900 and the First World War.[38] Until then, many large corporations apparently enjoyed monopolies, did not seek publicity, and did not care what the public thought of them. Muckrakers and government investigators put large corporations on the defensive. The corporations' executives complained that some stories about them were untrue[39] and they gave journalists carefully prepared response statements. However, because the statements were prepared by amateurs and had little news value, many were edited or discarded. Corporations needed more effective representatives and thus a new profession arose -- the public relations counsel, generally called "the publicity man."[40] According to Cooper, many of these first PR practitioners were former journalists.[41]

World War I contributed to the public's skepticism, if not hostility, toward propagandists, yet simultaneously contributed to the growth of the public relations industry. Several writers explained that propaganda was so effective during the war that it became a universal practice.[42] Bernays explained:

> The World War left business astounded at what the technique of propaganda had accomplished in the conflict. Not only had it raised men and money for individual governments. There had been propaganda in favor of the love of nations and other propaganda for the hate of other nations – all successful. There had been propaganda to raise morale and other propaganda to break it down. Propaganda – all of it – making its mark on millions of people.[43]

Big corporations competing for the public's dollar and goodwill recognized the techniques' possibilities, "and so there developed a special profession" labeled by Bernays as "the public relations counsel."

By 1923, organizations of all types had publicists.[44] As the field evolved, so did its practitioners' titles. Partly to improve their image, publicists were given more impressive titles, including "director of publicity," "publicity engineer," "public relations counselor," "goodwill ambassador," "vice president," or "assistant to the president."[45] Whatever they called themselves, all PR practitioners sought approximately the same thing -- free and profitable advertising for their employers and the goodwill of the public.[46]

(3) The Methods of Early PR Practitioners

Early PR practitioners relied on bribes, gifts, and stunts to gain attention and gradually refined their techniques. These methods were often successful but were generally viewed by journalists as deceptive, unethical, or foolish. Each of these techniques will be discussed and supported with examples.

Bribes. In the 1800s, some publicists offered journalists cash, a practice that continued through the 1920s and '30s. However, most journalists agreed that they should not accept money, especially not large sums, from people they wrote about. Moreover, they condemned colleagues who did.[47] For example, in 1858 *The New York Tribune* criticized seven reporters who were paid $200 each for services to the city. Another reporter was criticized for accepting a golden-headed cane from a politician, a gold watch from a lawyer, and a weekly salary and free passes from the owner of a theater.[48]

As noted by many authors, the activity of bribing reporters became widespread. Blake found that, "nobody hesitates about trying to bribe a reporter." For instance, a teacher might offer a reporter $1 for a glowing story about a Sunday school class, a traveling minister might leave $5 on a reporter's desk, or a visitor might want a glowing obituary for a relative.[49] Vanderbilt documented that *The New York Herald* was besieged by all kinds of agents seeking space for photographs and news stories about their clients, with some offering reporters large sums to use their material.[50] For example, while working in Paris after World War I, a correspondent was offered one bribe to ignore an accident and another bribe to promote corsets.[51] Police reporters, especially, were tempted by graft. People arrested for drunken driving offered reporters bribes to keep their names out of newspapers, while judges offered reporters bribes to get their names into newspapers. Similarly, attorneys paid reporters for tips about cases they might handle.[52] Other bribes went directly to newspapers' owners. For example, *The San Francisco Bulletin* received a monthly check for $125 from the Southern Pacific railroad and additional checks from a gas company and other corporations, creating an atmosphere of dishonesty that permeated the newspaper.[53]

Gifts. Offering gifts to reporters became the popular practice by the early 1900s. The most common gifts included liquor, tickets (e.g., theater events, sporting events), books, railroad passes, Christmas presents, and invitations (e.g., dinners, parties, and clubs).[54] Critics called the gifts a form of petty graft and said they corrupted journalists, tarnished their reputations, and tainted the news because journalists treated their benefactors more kindly.[55] Nonetheless, poorly paid journalists seemed to welcome publicists' handouts.[56]

Stunts. During the early 1900s, "stunts" (i.e., sensational creations that attracted columns of free publicity) became popular. Following a publicist's advice, a circus might report that several of its most dangerous animals had escaped or an actress might report that her jewelry had been stolen. Publicists announced that other clients eloped, disappeared, or narrowly escaped death.[57] See Appendix B for more specific illustrations of publicists' early stunts and fakes.

The "stunt" era was epitomized by the activities of three early PR practitioners -- P.T. Barnum, Harry L. Reichenbach, and James S. Moran. P.T. Barnum, the "father of publicity" and "world's greatest showman," was a formerly a newspaper editor, understood the press, and earned editors' goodwill by advertising in their newspapers.[58] As a showman, Barnum flooded newspapers with stories about his amazing new discoveries. He emphasized the unusual, planted lies, indignantly denied his lies, engineered bogus arrests, and filed frivolous lawsuits. Also, to make his stories more credible, Barnum frequently concealed his identity as their source. For example, Barnum acquired Jumbo, "the biggest elephant ever known," and claimed that it had saved a little girl attacked by a Bengal tiger. To help publicize the attraction during a tour across the country, Barnum gave free rides on its back to children with disabilities, but also to the children of local editors.[59] Hundreds of thousands of people fought for tickets and in six weeks Barnum's receipts totaled $300,000.[60]

One of the movie industry's first PR practitioners, Harry L. Reichenbach, also obtained free publicity by staging practical jokes and hoaxes. "They can't help printing it," he said. "When we pull something off it has a genuine news value as far as the eye can see." He added that he never did anything malicious nor hurt anyone.[61] A colleague, James S. Moran, became known as a prankster and "the last great bunco artist in the profession of publicity."[62] He, too, worked briefly as a reporter before starting his new career, which spanned four decades (1937 until his retirement in 1985). Moran implemented a variety of zany stunts to gain publicity such as the following: to help a dairy get a cow into print, he dyed it purple;[63] to promote refrigerators, he traveled to Alaska to prove that he could sell an icebox to an Eskimo; and to promote the 1946 movie *The Egg and I*, he sat on an ostrich egg until it hatched (a feat that took 19 days, 4 hours, and 32 minutes).[64]

(4) Early Journalists' Criticisms

Journalists charged that PR practitioners were inaccurate and unqualified, calling them "fakers," "flacks," "propagandists," and "publicity crooks." Some journalists compared PR practitioners to pimps. Others accused them of corrupting the nation's channels of communication and democratic process.[65] An analysis of journalists' criticisms reveals that four beliefs or perceptions predominated: (1) PR practitioners sought free advertisements for special interests[66] (2) PR practitioners' fakes and stunts weakened public confidence (3) PR practitioners made it more difficult for journalists to report legitimate stories, and (4) PR practitioners violated the basic rules of news writing.

Criticism 1: PR Practitioners Sought Free Advertisements for Special Interests. Originally, readers were newspapers' primary source of profit, with advertising a byproduct. After the Civil War, however, advertisements became more important.[67] Journalists complained that PR practitioners tried to obtain free advertisements for their clients. Cooper explained, "Press agents were furnishing, and newspapers were printing gratis, matter that the business office held to be advertising that should be paid for at space rates. It belonged in advertising columns."[68]

Criticism 2: PR Practitioners' Fakes and Stunts Weakened Public Confidence. Journalists who were fooled by PR practitioners' stunts and fakes felt stupid but were resentful for other reasons as well. They complained that publicists' stories served special interests rather than the public and feared that the stunts and fakes would weaken the public's confidence in every story. Summarizing journalists' viewpoint, McKernon said:

> It is just as wrong morally to invade the strictly news columns with propaganda for a good cause as it is to invade them with propaganda of evil intent. Either invasion falsifies the picture due to the one who pays two or three cents for a newspaper and has a right to expect that what he finds in the strictly news columns will have been influenced by no consideration other than the obligation of the editor to give him the significant news of the day presented with a proper sense of proportion.[69]

Criticism 3: PR Practitioners Made it More Difficult to Report Legitimate Stories. Journalists added that PR practitioners concealed important facts and made it more difficult for them to see important sources.[70] For instance, when John D. Rockefeller was married the publicity was handled by Ivy Lee, a man who was considered "oddly distrustful of the press." Lee gave journalists some information about the wedding but tried, unsuccessfully, to stop them from attending it.[71] Similarly, journalists accused PR practitioners of hiding bad news and several cited the aircraft industry. For example, when a plane crashed in 1931, airline employees tried to prevent photographers from taking pictures of the wreckage. Airline employees at other wrecks even painted over or scratched out the names on airplanes.[72] Prager, a police reporter, also resented a publicist's cover-up. While working in 1944, he saw one of the country's most famous comedians go free after kicking a pregnant woman in the stomach. When he tried to talk to the comedian, a publicist intervened and the victim was persuaded to drop her complaint making it impossible for Prager to report the story.[73]

Criticism 4: PR Practitioners Violated the Basic Rules of News Writing. By the start of the twentieth century, journalists had developed a unique style of writing and they complained that PR practitioners failed to conform to it. Editors wanted stories that were clear, specific, and interesting.[74] To save valuable space, they taught reporters "to state a fact and to state it quickly," cutting reporters' cherished adjectives.[75] Typically, Croly insisted in 1868 that newspapers should be honest and present all the news "regardless of parties or persons, and without the slightest tinge of personal or partisan bias."[76] Editors wanted restraint, not exaggeration. They encouraged the use of nouns and verbs, not adverbs and adjectives. Editor Morton Sontheimer voiced the following typical statement, "One well-chosen verb packs more power than a string of adjectives and adverbs. Leave the adjectives to the circus press agents."[77] PR practitioners, however, used favorable adverbs and adjectives. In addition, news stories were expected to be accurate, objective, and fair -- not bogus.[78] Reporters were trained to see both sides of every issue and to get all the facts.[79] They therefore complained that publicists favored their clients' side instead of presenting both sides of issues.

Briefly, three other factors exacerbated the conflict. First, journalists may have been envious, since PR practitioners seemed to enjoy better salaries and working conditions. Second, they annoyed journalists by repeatedly calling with unimportant stories. Third, journalists felt that their work of informing the public was noble and pure whereas PR practitioners were propagandists willing to work for anyone able to pay them.[80]

(5) Journalists' Own Problems

Given journalists' own problems and reputations, some of their criticisms of PR practitioners seem puzzling, even hypocritical. Problems within the newspaper industry contributed to journalists' shift from newsrooms to related fields, including public relations. Whenever journalists gathered the talk moved "to the lack of reward, the hopelessness as to the future, and the general worthlessness of newspaper work as a career." Analysis identified the following five major problems with newspaper work: (1) long-hours, (2) lack of job security, (3) unpleasant assignments, (4) incessant work demands, and (5) negative reputations.

Problem 1: Long-Hours. Seltzer found that reporters in Cleveland worked 16 to 18 hours a day when a big story was breaking.[81] Lancaster also found that 12-hour days were routine and 15-hour days not uncommon.[82] "To work 36 hours at a stretch on a big story was not unusual," Sontheimer agreed, "and sometimes there'd be 48 hours' steady going under pressure."[83] In New York after World War I, Vanderbilt seldom worked fewer than 12 hours a day and felt lucky to receive one day off a week. Further, he worked every Christmas, New Year's, Thanksgiving, Fourth of July, and all other holidays.[84] St. John added that reporters often went days with little food and no sleep, calling on reserves of nervous energy to sustain them. To succeed under those conditions, he said, reporters needed a youthful stamina "and the ability to think quickly, move fast, and live on black coffee and cigarettes."[85] As they grew older, journalists unable to maintain that pace saw their incomes dwindle and often were stuck away at a desk.[86]

Problem 2: Lack of Job Security. The work in newsrooms was insecure as well.[87] Periodically to save money, a half-dozen or so employees would get the ax, and Sontheimer said one "would almost surely be an old-timer who'd spent his life with the outfit and couldn't produce much any more."[88] A New York daily newspaper fired 20 employees in one day, and a Boston daily fired seven. Why? "Fundamentally," Wright said, "because of the overwhelming supply of reporters." Wright explained:

> An editor in any of the metropolitan centers of today would have no more hesitation, if he chanced to feel in the mood, in ordering out seven or eight men than in hurriedly clearing waste "copy" from his desk. For he knows that, early next morning, perhaps 20 men, not freshlings but capable writers and copy-handlers, would be in his office beseeching him for the positions vacated, and in a half-hour he could have newcomers doing efficiently the work performed by those ejected the day before.[89]

Problem 3: Unpleasant Assignments. Some assignments were both difficult and unpleasant. As a beginner in 1912, Miller covered a police court in Chicago's most disreputable section and said:

> Every morning the court was jammed, and the cases dealt with almost every kind of human malfeasance – prostitution, perversion, sluggings, stabbings, shootings, burglary, dope addiction, razor fights, and hatchet killings. It was a dreary and disheartening introduction to newspaper work. Nearly every person in the foul, dirty room was vicious and depraved. The place stank with the mingled odors of unwashed bodies, alcoholic breaths, and the cheap perfumery of prostitutes.[90]

Sontheimer, too, found that a police reporter "will meet the underworld, see legs and arms amputated and abdomens opened up ... touch cadavers, elbow the bereaved and discourse with the despondent."[91] Worse, journalists witnessed executions and informed sources that relatives had died.[92]

Problem 4: Incessant Work Demands. Because of the work's constant demands, journalists found it difficult to marry and balance their responsibilities at work and at home.[93] "The reporter's role was more Spartan than romantic," King concluded. "His job required a constitution of iron, a bottomless well of energy, and inexhaustible patience merely to cope with working conditions."[94] Copeland called journalism the hardest profession in the world and one with a high death rate.[95] Journalists enjoyed no Sabbath, no holiday, no day of rest. Rather, newspapers were printed 365 days a year, exhausting their staffs.[96] There were no such things as overtime, vacations, health insurance, severance pay, or pensions.

Problem 5: Negative Reputations. Early reporters and editors were no great paragons of virtue. Rather, many engaged in the very practices (e.g., faking) that they condemned when conducted by PR practitioners. Through the 1920s and '30s, journalists were portrayed as coarse, loathsome, loudly dressed, ill mannered, nauseously obtrusive, irresponsible, never entirely clean, and never entirely sober.[97] Walker said there was no great mystery about how journalists acquired the reputation of being heavy drinkers -- they drank.[98] When Sontheimer entered the business, he found that every office had at least one drunk on its staff, and some had several who staggered in every payday so drunk that they had to be sent home in a cab.[99]

Journalists' newsgathering techniques and choice of stories contributed to their sordid reputation. Reporters seemed to invade other people's privacy, to lie, to fake, and to steal.[100] "Anyone who can't be a convincing deceiver, who can't lie with a sincere face, is going to have a heck of a time as a reporter," Sontheimer said. "There are lots of times when a reporter has to be downright dishonest to get a story.[101] For years, reporters invented colorful details that made their stories more interesting, a practice called "filling in." Other reporters invented entire stories, a practice that continued through the 1930s.[102] Still others stole pictures and diaries.[103] Thus, one reporter exclaimed: "The things we do for our papers! We lie, we cheat, we swindle and steal. We break into houses. We'd almost commit murder for a story."[104] Some newspapers were indeed sensational and emphasized stories about lurid crimes, adultery, and other scandals.[105] Nonetheless, journalists felt superior to PR practitioners.

(6) Journalists' Goals and Ultimate Fate

Another contradiction seems undeniable. While condemning public relations, journalists simultaneously embraced it. In 1889, New York's dailies employed about 500 young reporters, and according to *The Journalist*, "very few of them expect to make the reporting of news a life business."[106] Keller estimated that 90% of the people who entered journalism left it before they became "old."[107] Some reporters advanced at their newspapers and became foreign correspondents or editorial writers. "To become a great editor ... is a reporter's highest ambition," Vanderbilt said.[108] Kirby disagreed, insisting that most reporters dreamt of fame as short story writers. He found that talented writers from all parts of the United States came to New York, intending to earn a living at newspapers only temporarily, while striving for success as novelists, short story writers, or magazine editors.[109]

Holmes knew two types of reporters: "youngsters who planned to be foreign correspondents or big-name writers, and more mature men, many of whom hoped to buy a country weekly."[110] According to St. John, reporters had three dreams: to write a column with the freedom to say whatever they wanted, to save enough money to buy a weekly, and to buy a quiet farm where they could write books.[111] Despite their dreams, most reporters abandoned the newspaper industry entirely. Many left for law, business, politics, finance, or the theater business.[112] Others became soldiers, professors, or private detectives.[113] Salisbury also found that journalists used their jobs at newspapers as stepping stones to becoming great poets, artists, dramatists, novelists, statesmen, explorers, military heroes, financiers, doctors, and lawyers. However, Salisbury, a cynic, added that a larger number became "press agents, politicians, private secretaries, grocery keepers, druggists, theatrical managers, street car conductors, gamblers, blackmailers, drunkards, opium fiends, paupers, and lunatics."[114]

Journalists often accepted part-time jobs in other fields while still employed at newspapers. As early as 1867, Wilcox declared, "hardly any journalist in New York lives upon his regular salary, eking it out in a dozen ways."[115] Reporters in small towns served as correspondents for newspapers in big cities.[116] They also wrote for magazines and other publications, including encyclopedias.[117] Some in big cities were paid for extra duties (e.g., writing editorials or articles for newspapers' Sunday editions) or reviewed books but typically were given only the books (which they then sold).[118]

During the twentieth century, more and more journalists found part-time jobs as publicists for theaters and other entertainment companies. Typically, each theater had its own press agent.[119] For example, Morehouse handled the publicity for several in Atlanta.[120] "The outside employment newspapermen obtain is usually publicity work," Sontheimer agreed.[121] Hartt also found that poorly paid reporters and editors would "cheerfully act as passionate press agents for theaters."[122]

Although journalism's beginners rarely mentioned public relations as their ultimate goal, a growing number accepted full-time jobs in the field. Journalists became effective practitioners because they understood the media and were able to use their contacts in newsrooms.[123] Newsroom observers began noticing the trend as early as the 1890s.[124] Lancaster said, "many reporters, including some of the best, eventually departed for business, government, and the developing specialty of press agentry."[125] Walker agreed that, "for the newspaper man who has lost his job for whatever cause...publicity work is the first and sometimes the only refuge."[126]

Still, journalists felt betrayed and contempt when a colleague left for public relations. Beaman called public relations "a form of purgatory."[127] When *The New York World* ceased publication in 1931, leaving hundreds of men and women without jobs, St. John said the unlucky "would wind up in the poorhouse, the morgue, or in some public relations office, which is almost the worst that can happen to a newspaperman."[128] Editors refused to hire beginners who seemed likely to leave for public relations. Walker explained, "newspaper executives do not like the idea of spending much time and patience on beginners, only to find after a few years that the paper actually has been training, not newspaper men, but press agents who would leave at the first offer of more money."[129] Similarly, few editors rehired reporters who left for public relations and then wanted their old jobs back. Again, Walker explained:

> To the newspaper editor it is always a little sad when one of his best men leaves the paper to take a publicity job. The feeling, indeed, is sometimes bitter, and the editor knows that, even though the man may be starving next year, he cannot come back to his old job on the paper. The door often is closed to many fairly able men who have found press agentry less profitable and attractive than they had expected, and who seek to return to newspaper work. "You thought you were smart; now suffer!" is the attitude.[130]

Holmes experienced that prejudice himself. After working for two dailies, he accepted a job as the publicist for a politician. When the politician placed second in a primary, Holmes needed a new job and found that "once a newsman has turned publicist, he finds it hard to settle back into the newspaper world: in the first place, he has to swallow a lower salary, in the second place, the editor has to swallow a writer who once turned his back upon what is considered a 'truly ethical' job to take the Judas silver of a subsidized pen."[131] That prejudice continued into the twenty-first century and Wizda explained that when journalists leave a newsroom "it's like quitting the fraternity." Colleagues think those who depart are bailing or selling out. Wizda added, "traditionally people who left the newsroom went into public relations, the death star of jobs after journalism."[132]

Despite the general contempt in newsrooms, only a few journalists admitted their dependence on PR practitioners. In 1928, Cooper said the information PR practitioners provided "was really necessary if newspapers were to fulfill their duty of giving the public news."[133] Prager said New York's firefighters earned reporters' eternal gratitude by hiring a publicist to appear at all major fires and immediately tell reporters how the fires started, what was burning, who (if anyone) had been hurt or rescued, and what special problems firefighters encountered.[134] Further, reporters assigned to lunches, dinners, and banquets appreciated the fact someone reserved seats for them near a speaker's table or, even better, distributed printed copies of the speeches to be made.[135]

Systematic studies documented these few journalists' casual observations. For example, on Dec. 29, 1926, Bent found that 147 of the stories in *The New York Times* had been suggested, created, or supplied by PR practitioners. Only 83 had not, with another 26 doubtful. Excluding the doubtful, about 60% of the stories *The Times* published that morning had originated with PR practitioners. Moreover, Bent did not count any sports, society, or real estate stories, although all 50 of *The Times'* stories about real estate seemed to have originated with publicists.[136] In 1934, Walker estimated that, "the hand of the publicity man, often carefully disguised, may be found in perhaps one-third the news items in many issues of a New York newspaper." Of 64 local stories in one paper, Walker found that 42 "were rewritten or pasted up from press agent material: a little more than 60%." Without PR practitioners, Walker added, the city's daily newspapers would have to double the size of their staffs.[137]

Bixler agreed in 1930 that PR practitioners enabled newspapers to hire smaller staffs. He found that four of newspapers' sections (sports, drama, movies, and real estate) had become particularly dependent on publicists. Bixler added that women's pages had become almost as dependent on publicists, and that many stories in business sections were also influenced by publicists. Only newspapers' stories about crime remained unaffected by PR practitioners.[138] Commenting on the trend, McKernon added:

> For the honest publicity representative who works in the open I have the greatest respect. Many such have done the newspapers an inestimable service by facilitating the work of reporters, and they have served both the papers and the reading public by making possible better, more intelligent, and more nearly accurate reports of the activities of the institutions they represent.

> They have brought to the press a technical knowledge that newspaper men could not be expected to possess, and through their cooperation have made it easier for reporters and editors to determine the news value and the "carrying power" of stories dealing with a thousand and one differing subjects.[139]

Conclusion

The books and articles written by and about early U.S. newspaper reporters and editors support the belief that journalists treated public relations and its practitioners with contempt. Together, all the entries reveal that journalists who worked in cities from New York to Los Angeles and from Minneapolis to Atlanta expressed negative attitudes about public relations and its practitioners. Moreover, their attitudes remained negative through every decade, from the nineteenth century through the mid 1950s. Journalists' hostility toward public relations developed quickly, appears to stem from a myriad of interrelated factors, and persists. This study focused on three unanswered questions about that relationship.

RQ1: What are the Origins of Journalists' Hostility Toward Public Relations?

Americans always have sought publicity but initially as unorganized individuals. It may be impossible to determine when public relations emerged as a distinct field -- during the mid 1800s, at the start of the twentieth century, or after World War I. Clearly, however, the field's expansion during the early twentieth century was dramatic.

Regardless of the exact date of the field's origins, its early practitioners angered journalists. They invaded newsrooms and tried to use or manipulate journalists. Further, some corrupted journalists by offering them money and gifts. Whatever their tactics, their goal was the same -- free publicity and preferably on newspapers' front pages. Many PR practitioners were former journalists who understood the press and knew how to write (or invent) good stories. They flattered, cultivated, and exaggerated, creating sensational stories which reporters seemed unable to ignore. Journalists resented their efforts, complaining that publicists misled them, misled the public, and endangered the media's credibility. PR practitioners, however, had conflicting interests and priorities. They had to satisfy their clients but also felt that what they did was important -- that they, too, helped inform the public. Those who created fakes felt they were necessary and harmless.

RQ2: Why Has Journalists' Hostility Persisted for 100 or More Years?

Journalists rarely acknowledged PR practitioners' contributions, focusing primarily on the negative. They resented publicists' efforts to promote special interests and (for newspapers' economic well being) wanted other institutions to buy advertisements. Other institutions, however, found that the cost of hiring PR practitioners was considerably less than the cost of hiring ad agencies and paying for space in newspapers' advertising columns. Moreover, the stories that PR practitioners placed in news columns were more credible. Journalists also seem to have been envious. They were overworked, underpaid, and overwhelmed by a multitude of other problems. Those problems were so severe that most abandoned the newspaper industry. There also was another continuing source of hostility -- the perception (at least among journalists) that they had a more honest, honorable, important, and altruistic mission.

RQ3: Why is the Relationship Riddled with Stereotypes and Contradictions?

There are two or more sides to every conflict, yet journalists proud of their objectivity seemed to lose their objectivity when issues affected their own lives and work. Then, they tended to see only their side of issues. Early journalists, for example, had a terrible reputation, caused in part by the types of stories they reported and by the tactics they used to obtain stories. Yet forgetting their own faults, journalists condemned PR practitioners with similar faults. Journalists also generalized, creating persistent stereotypes, some contradictory. Five major contradictions are revealed through our results.

Contradiction 1 In one contradiction, journalists wanted information to be easily available, yet resented the men and women who made it available. By the mid twentieth century, journalists were dependent upon PR practitioners for a large percentage of the stories appearing in newspapers. But admitting their dependence would shatter cherished ideals. Journalists were proud of their ability to uncover stories, verify details, and expose sham. Thus, they were unlikely to admit their dependence, lack of skepticism, failure to verify, and failure to expose every sham.

Contradiction 2 A second contradiction seems even more apparent. While condemning public relations, journalists simultaneously embraced it. Young journalists were idealists with dreams impossible to fulfill. Not every journalist could become a foreign correspondent, buy a country weekly, or become a famous author. So when burned out and disillusioned by the newspaper industry, they turned to related fields and found that public relations offered a multitude of good jobs for which they were well-qualified.

Contradiction 3 In a third contradiction, journalists complained that PR practitioners were unqualified and poor writers who failed to understand the press. At the same time, they admitted that many of public relation's practitioners spent years working for newspapers. No one said that only newspapers' least capable reporters and editors left for public relations. Rather, the exodus from newsrooms included some of newspapers' most talented men and women. Still, the instant men and women left, they were ostracized.

Contradiction 4 Journalists' own problems contributed to their shift to public relations. They seemed to be chronic complainers, forever griping about their long hours, low pay, stress, insecurity, and unpleasant assignments. However, anyone who left a newsroom as a result of those problems risked being condemned, especially anyone who moved to public relations.

Contradiction 5 Journalists' contempt for public relations and its practitioners is also puzzling because they rarely, if ever, expressed a similar contempt for related fields. Thousands of journalists accepted jobs in the magazine, book, radio, television, and advertising industries, with little or no stigma attached to any of those fields. However, those fields involved other conflicts (e.g., competing for audiences' time and advertisers' dollars).

Finally, the answers to this study's three questions reveal some fault on both sides. Public relations evolved over a period of 100 or more years before blossoming after World War I. Some tactics used by the field's early practitioners were crude and by today's standards, unethical. Nonetheless, those tactics worked and at the time, may have seemed necessary. During that 100-year period, journalists became increasingly hostile and developed negative stereotypes. Some skepticism is healthy, even necessary but -- once established -- stereotypes are difficult to change, even when no longer warranted. As a result, journalists' prejudice against public relations shows no signs of abatement. Rather, current trends in the newspaper industry, including cutbacks in staffs and budgets, seem likely to increase journalists' dependence on PR practitioners – and also journalists' shift from newsrooms to public relations.

In answering the above research questions, we believe that our exploratory study not only contributes to the scholarly literature, but also has potential practical implications for helping solve this persistent problem. Specifically, we hope that our paper will serve as a springboard for open discussion and ongoing dialogue on this topic between journalism and public relations practitioners and educators. By acknowledging the contextual and situational conditions of the past and learning from the viewpoints of individuals who actually experienced those events, we can move toward strengthening the professional relationship in the future. Initial steps toward changing this attitude may include promoting greater awareness, understanding, and interactive discussion of the historic roots of this relationship through journalism and public relations publications on this topic in academic textbooks and journals; through presentations and joint sessions at professional conferences, meetings, and special workshops; and through classroom lectures and assignments in courses that could even be co-taught by instructors in both fields.

We also offer this framework of historic findings from early insiders' perspectives as a reference point for future comparative research efforts on this topic. Several worthwhile possibilities include historical analyses of early journalists' attitudes toward other industry personnel (e.g., early advertising practitioners) and attitudes towards different types of PR practitioners; comparisons of the attitudes of early print versus early broadcast journalists; and gender, ethnic, and cross-cultural comparisons regarding the historic roots of this relationship. The specific data collection methods used depends, of course, on the research question. Finally, it is important that longitudinal studies be conducted to track and monitor possible changes in journalists' perceptions and attitudes toward public relations over time.

Appendix A
Background Characteristics of Sample

Allsopp, Fred W. Like many nineteenth century journalists, Allsopp started as a printer. See: *Little Adventures in Newspaperdom* by Allsopp. Little Rock, Ark.: Arkansas Writer Publishing Co., 1922.

Andrews, Robert Hardy. After starting his career in Aberdeen, South Dakota, Andrews moved to the *Minneapolis Journal* during Prohibition and became that daily's city editor. During the 1920s, Andrews moved to the *Chicago Daily News*. See: *A Corner of Chicago* by Andrews. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1963.

Beaman, Niver W. After working as a reporter in Connecticut during the 1920s, Beaman became a city editor. He later worked as a rewrite man for the *New York Daily News* and also worked for the *Philadelphia Morning Record*. See: *Fat Man in a Phone Booth* by Beaman. Chicago: Cloud, Inc., 1947.

Blythe, Samuel G. The son of a newspaper editor, Blythe started in a small town at $10 a week. After serving as a city editor, he moved to New York, the Mecca for journalists, and also wrote magazine articles. See: *The Making Of A Newspaper Man* by Blythe. Philadelphia: Henry Altemus Company, 1912. Reprinted in 1970 by Greenwood Press, Publishers of Westport, Conn.

Bovard, O.K. As the stern but brilliant editor of Joseph Pulitzer's *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* from 1908 to 1938, Bovard helped make that newspaper one of the country's finest dailies. See: *Bovard of the Post-Dispatch* by James W. Markham. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1954.

Chapin, Charles. After beginning as a paperboy at the age of 14, Chapin became city editor of the *Chicago Times*, then city editor of the *New York World* (and observed that hundreds of clever colleagues were lured into better-paying jobs in public relations). See: *Charles Chapin's Story* by Chapin. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1920.

Congdon, Charles T. After working as an editor, Congdon joined Horace Greeley's staff at the *New York Tribune*. See: *Reminiscences Of A Journalist* by Congdon. Boston: James R. Osgood And Company, 1880.

Diehl, Charles. After starting as an apprentice in a village printing office during the 1880s, Diehl moved to the *Chicago Times* published by Wilbur Storey. See: *The Staff Correspondent* by Diehl. San Antonio, Texas: The Clegg Company, 1931.

Doherty, Bill. The son of a police reporter, in 1933 Bill Doherty became a police reporter in Chicago. See: *Crime Reporter* by Doherty. New York: Exposition Press, 1964.

Doherty, Edward. After starting at the *Chicago Examiner*, Edward Doherty worked for the *Chicago Record Herald* and the *Chicago Tribune*, then moved to *Liberty* magazine. During the 1930s, he worked for a newspaper in New York. See: *Gall and Honey* by Doherty. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1941.

Drawbell, James. An immigrant from Scotland, Drawbell worked as a copy reader in Montreal, then took a train to New York during the 1920s and obtained a job at William Randolph Hearst's *Journal*. See: *The Sun Within Us* by Drawbell. London: Collins, 1963.

Edgett, Edwin Francis. For almost 50 years, Edgett worked for the *Boston Transcript*, sometimes supplementing his salary by writing magazine articles and handling the publicity for local theaters. See: *I Speak for Myself: An Editor In His World* by Edgett. New York: the Macmillan Company, 1940.

Holmes, Victor. After dropping out of college and inheriting $12,000, Holmes bought a country weekly. He also worked for a small daily in Missouri and for the *Kansas City Journal*, became a publicist, then worked for other dailies in Cleveland, Chicago, and Omaha. See: *Salt Of The Earth* by Holmes. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941.

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Kirby, Louis. In an era before cars, telephones, typewriters, and handouts, Kirby found reporting difficult at the start of his career. During the 1880s, Kirby worked in Louisville, then in other big cities, including Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia. He also worked for several newspapers in New York City. See: *Fourscore Breathless Years* by Kirby. Boston: Meador Publishing Co., 1951.

Koenigsberg, Moses. At the age of 13, Koenigsberg became a reporter for the *San Antonio Times* at a salary of $13 a week. He moved to Houston, New Orleans, and New York, becoming an executive in the Hearst empire. See: *King News* by Koenigsberg. Freeport, N.Y.: Books For Libraries Press, 1941.

McCullagh, Joseph B. Born in Ireland in 1842, McCullagh became a printer, then a reporter, after immigrating to the United States. During the Civil War, he served as a correspondent for the *Cincinnati Gazette*. McCullagh moved to St. Louis in 1872 and worked there for 25 years, all but four as an editor at the *Globe-Democrat*, becoming one of the foremost editors in America. See: *Little Mack: Joseph B. McCullagh of* The *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* by Charles C. Clayton. Carbondale. Southern Illinois University Press, 1969.

Mencken, H.L. Born in Baltimore in 1880, Mencken became famous as a journalist, humorist, columnist, and magazine editor. He started as a reporter for the *Baltimore Morning Herald*, then joined the staff of the *Baltimore Sun* and remained with the *Sun* most of his life. In 1923, he co-founded a magazine, *The American Mercury*. See: *A Choice of Days* by Mencken. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980.

Miller, Webb. In 1912, Webb started as a cub, paid $12 a week, in Chicago. By the 1920s, he was a foreign correspondent stationed in London and Paris. See: *I Found No Peace* by Miller. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1937.

Morehouse, Ward. After starting in Savannah in 1915, Morehouse moved to Atlanta, then New York, hoping to become a playwright. In New York, he started at the *Tribune*, moved to the *Sun*, then to the *World-Telegram*. See: *Just the Other Day* by Morehouse. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1953.

Morton, Charles W. Entering the business late (at the age of 30) Morton began work at the *Boston Evening Transcript* in 1929 and was briefly employed by the *New Yorker* magazine. See: *It Has Its Charms* by Morton. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1966.

Older, Fremont. After starting work in 1869 at a small newspaper in Berlin, Wisconsin, Older became famous as managing editor of the *San Francisco Bulletin*, making it a financial as well as a popular success. In 1918, he became editor of a daily published by William Randolph Hearst. See: *Fremont Older* by Evelyn Wells. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company Inc., 1936.

Prager, Theodore. After starting his career by running errands for a New York daily in 1916, Prager became a police reporter and worked for several newspapers during a long career in that city. See: *Police Reporter* by Prager. New York: Duell, Sloan And Pearce, 1957.

Ralph, Julian. While employed by the *New York Sun* after the Civil War, Ralph worked as a police reporter, legislative reporter, Washington correspondent, foreign correspondent, and war correspondent -- but also contributed articles to magazines. See: *Gentleman of the Press: The Life and Times of an Early Reporter, Julian Ralph of the* Sun by Paul Lancaster. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1992.

Salisbury, William. Around the start of the twentieth century, Salisbury spent nine years working for newspapers in five cities and found it a disillusioning experience. Salisbury complained that originality and initiative were frowned upon, that reporters were exploited, and that newspapers were dominated by their business office. See: *The Career of a Journalist* by Salisbury. New York: B.W. Dodge & Company, 1908.

Seltzer, Louis B. Born in Cleveland in 1897, Seltzer left school at 13 to begin work as an office boy and cub at *The Leader*. After also working for *The Cleveland News*, then for an advertising agency, he went to *The Cleveland Press*, becoming its editor in 1928. See: *The Years Were Good* by Seltzer. Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1956.

Smith, H. Allen. Entering journalism around 1920 (at the end of the era of itinerant newspapermen) Smith worked in numerous cities, including Louisville, Tampa, Tulsa, Denver, and New York. Arriving in New York in 1929, he worked for *United Press*, *Fortune* magazine, and the *World-Telegram*. See: *The Compleat Practical Joker* by Smith. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1953. See also: *To Hell In A Handbasket* by Smith. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1962.

Sontheimer, Morton. Entering the business when drunks were common and college graduates uncommon, Sontheimer, too, worked in several big cities, from Philadelphia to New York, and became an editor. See: *Newspaperman: A Book about the Business* by Sontheimer. New York: Whittlesey House, 1941.

St. John, Robert. After starting at the *Hartford Courant* during the early 1920s, St. John worked for several dailies in Chicago, then became an editor at a suburban daily. From there, he moved to Philadelphia and, in 1932, bought a quiet farm where he could write. By then, St. John had been a reporter, a rewrite man, a city editor, a managing editor, and a publisher. Leaving the farm in 1939, he sailed to Paris to cover the approaching war -- and soon was broadcasting to millions of people every day. See: *This Was My World* by St. John. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1953.

Underwood, Agness. After starting as a temporary telephone switchboard operator during the 1920s, Underwood became one of the first women to succeed as the city editor of a great daily, the *Los Angeles Evening Herald* and *Express*. See: *Newspaperwoman* by Underwood. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1949.

Vanderbilt, Cornelius. While most journalists only dreamed of obtaining a job in New York, Vanderbilt started there as a cub in 1919. See: *Experiences Of A Cub Reporter* by Vanderbilt. New York: Beekman Publishers Inc., 1974.

Walker, Stanley. One of the country's most outstanding city editors, Walker worked for the N*ew York Herald Tribune* and was the author of several best-selling books. He also wrote magazine articles about journalism. See: *City Editor*. New York: E.A. Stokes, 1934. Reprinted in 1999 by The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Winchell, Walter. Although dependent upon publicists for many of the items in his Broadway column, Winchell was largely contemptuous of them. See: *Winchell: Gossip, Power And The Culture Of Celebrity* by Neal Gabler. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995

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Appendix B
Examples of Early PR Practitioners' Stunts

During the movie industry's early years, PR practitioners created stunts, fakes, and hoaxes that attracted columns of front-page publicity. Briefly, seven examples include:

Example 1: In 1923, a publicist invited Denver's reporters and photographers to a picnic on Pikes Peak. At the summit, the picnickers found a 40-foot wooden whale built to publicize a movie about the sea.[140]

Example 2: When Thomas R. Zann checked into New York's Bellclaire Hotel, he said he was a pianist and wanted a huge box containing his piano hoisted through a window and into his room. The next day, Zann ordered 15 pounds of raw meat, and hotel employees found a full-grown lion in his room. The police were called, and reporters followed. Reporters saw the lion, learned that it had frightened the hotel's employees, and interviewed the man – T.R. Zann – about his 1,100-pound pet. The stunt, staged by Harry Reichenbach, helped publicize the premiere of "The Return of Tarzan," the third movie in a series.[141]

Example 3: Another of Reichenbach's stunts involved an Arabian sheik who said he came all the way from Turkey to find a beautiful virgin princess believed to have eloped from Stamboul with an American Marine. She had been betrothed to a Turkish prince and left behind a fortune, perhaps as much as $100 million. The sheik had $25,000 in dollar bills, a reward for her return dead or alive. Newspapers were full of stories about the princess, who then appeared in a movie titled "The Virgin of Stamboul."[142]

Example 4: A man crossing a bridge in Camden, N.J., saw an attractive young woman climbing a handrail. A crowd gathered, and a police officer tackled the woman who clawed at him and screamed: "My unborn child! You do not understand. I must die. My unborn child!" The woman refused to identify herself but continued to say, "My unborn child." The story remained in the news until reporters learned that the woman was an actress paid to publicize a movie titled "My Unborn Child."[143]

Example 5: Anna Held, a European actress, became famous in the United States by asking a dairy to deliver 400 gallons of milk each day for her baths at the Savoy Hotel. After several weeks, Held sued the diary for delivering sour milk, and the diary countersued for nonpayment, a story picked up by newspapers everywhere. While immersed in a tub of milk, Held then called a press conference to explain how a daily bath in milk contributed to her beauty.[144]

Example 6: On the evening of July 18, 1920, a man walking through New York's Central Park said he heard a splash and found a woman's handbag and hat on the ground near a large lake.[145] The woman was named "Yuki Onda," and a letter in her hotel room seemed to explain why she committed suicide; she had fallen in love with a U.S. Navy officer who would not marry her.[146] Using lanterns, spotlights, and rowboats, police dragged practically every square inch of the lake but failed to find her.[147] On July 26, a critic for The World suggested that police looking for Miss Onda should drop in at the Astor Theatre and watch a movie titled "The Breath of the Gods." The critic had gone to review the movie and discovered that Yuki Onda was the name of its leading character. "It appears from The Breath of the Gods that Yuki did not commit suicide in New York at all," he reported. Rather, she had returned to Japan and married a prince.[148]

Example 7: A year later – on Aug. 17, 1921 – a carrier pigeon, wet and exhausted, appeared in New York, and police found a message attached to one of its legs: "Notify Dan Singer, Belleclaire Hotel. I am lost in Hoodoo Mountains, Yellowstone Park. Send help, provisions,and pack-horses.The note was signed "Heller" and dated Sept. 13. Daniel J. Singer of the Belleclaire Hotel rushed to the police station and identified the lost man as Edmund H. Heller, a famous explorer, naturalist, and cameraman who had gone to Yellowstone to photograph its animals.[149] Newspapers, from Chicago to San Francisco reprinted the story before skeptics calculated that, to fly 2,000 in a few days, the bird would have had to fly as fast as an airplane.[150] A publicist apparently created the hoax to advertise Heller's lectures.[151]

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The Fools, the Wise and the Meaning Makers
Understandings of Publics and Understanding Risk Perception

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Abstract

This paper explores the risk perception construct though three distinct understandings of the public: the public as fools, the public as wise and the public as meaning makers. By examining three understanding of publics, alternative conceptualizations of risk perception and alternative roles for communicators are articulated. By overtly acknowledging assumptions about publics, practitioners and scholars can expand their view of the risk perception construct and have alternative conceptualizations of the role of public relations in risk communication situations.

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Running Head: RISK PERCEPTIONS

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Perhaps one the greatest challenges facing public relations professionals is communicating about physical hazards--those hazards, natural or man-made, that may result in injury or death. On one hand, communicators may face the task of reducing perceptions of risk and allaying fear. Stereotypical examples include advocates of nuclear power and the communication staffs of chemical manufacturers. On the other hand, communicators face the opposite challenge of trying to stimulate perceptions of risk when a public is apathetic about some hazard. Examples include the nuclear power opponent and the public health advocate encouraging bicycle helmet usage. Whether one's challenge is to heighten or reduce perceptions of risk, the assumed characteristics of the public weighs heavily on how risk perceptions are conceptualized.

Concerns about motivating people to action, scientific illiteracy, and social conflicts over risks have motivated study of how people develop risk perceptions. Risk perception is a well-established factor associated with host of human behaviors. On a societal level, high perceptions of risk are associated citizen demands for governmental regulation, and low perceptions of risk are associated with failure to respond to hazards. On an individual level, high levels of perceived risk are associated with both compliant, recommended behaviors and fatalistic, maladaptive responses to hazards.

There are surprisingly few explicit definitions of risk perceptions given the amount of attention afforded the construct. Coleman (1993) writes that risk perception "is a vague term that has had many meanings: researchers have equated risk perception with attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and cognitions about risk" (p. 612). Dunwoody and Neuwirth (1991) note that risk perceptions have also been operationalized as behavior or intended behavior change in some studies. The results of previous risk perception studies, Coleman (1993) argues, are difficult to generalize from because of the variety of definitions and operationalizations of the risk perception construct (p. 613). What is clear is that risk perception plays a significant role in personal decisions and behaviors.

This paper explores the risk perception construct though three distinct understandings of the public: the public as fools, the public as wise and the public as meaning makers. By examining three understandings of publics, alternative conceptualizations of risk perception are articulated. Finally implications and observations relating to the practice of public relations are advanced.

The Public as Fools

Many argue that responses to risk are often illogical and contradictory. Some states, for example, have laws making it illegal to ride in a car without a seatbelt but have no laws requiring motorcyclists wear helmets. Like wise, individuals' responses to risk often are equally questionable. Imagine the person who always buckles up before lighting a cigarette and speeding down the highway. Such examples often lead communicators to imagine the public as uneducated and uneducable. Zeckhauser and Viscusi's (1990) complaint that "too much weight is placed on risks of low probability but high salience" highlights the assumption that lay people's faulty assessments result in a system of managing risk that is "deeply flawed" (p. 559).

Johnson (1993) refers to "risk perception" as "a misleading and standard term" (p. 189). The term itself implies that lay people assess risks flippantly whereas the expert activity of "risk assessment" predicts risk using "proper" considerations (Johnson, 1993). Likewise, Dunwoody and Neuwirth (1991) note that scholarly studies often define risk perception as the similarity between personal evaluation of hazards and expert risk estimations. They ask, "[t]o what extent should the government focus on risks that are of particular concern to its citizens, who may be misinformed and subject to severe errors in perceptions and valuation of risk?" (p. 563).

Incongruity between lay people and expert risk judgment is often at the center of social and political controversies (Committee on Risk Perception and Communication; Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education; Commission on Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Resources; & National Research Council, 1989). In short, how an expert defines risk is not how a lay person defines risk. Rather than acknowledging legitimacy of the public's perceptions, communicators often approach hazard issues with an "if you only knew what I know" attitude. Under such conditions, public relations is often casts as the corporate agent hired to allay fear and pave the path for organizations to compromise public health in pursuit of profits. Certainly that is the claim made by the authors of "Toxic Sludge in Good for You" who released a new book titled "Trust Us We're Experts!: How Industry Manipulates Science and Gambles with Your Future" in January 2001. Besides laying the path for one-way communication that is unproductive and induces distrust and anger, visions of an incompetent public, incapable of "properly" assessing risk, also endanger the democratic ideal of citizen involvement and participation.

Despite the negative consequences of understanding perceptions of risk as faulty conclusions of an irrational public, many still cling to the idea that expert assessments of risk are true, accurate and reliable. The test of time with incidents--such as international use of thalidomide, wide-scale applications of DDT, and, more recently, utilization of CAT scans on children--demonstrate that expert risk assessments are not ideal or flawless. Belief in a perfect ability to quantitatively assess risk implies that disagreement within the scientific community is impossible and that philosophies, methodologies, and personal interest do not impact the products of science.

The Public As Wise

While some view the public as uneducated and uneducable; others view the public as competent individuals capable of developing legitimate risk judgments. Fischhoff, Slovic and Lichtenstein (1982) say these extreme public depictions persist for political and theoretical convenience. If one advocates that the public participates in hazard management decisions, then one needs to describe the public as competent. An incompetent public, however, legitimizes experts and allows for elite policy making. Theoretically, Fischhoff, Slovic and Lichtenstein argue, it is hard to build a model where people are sometimes wise and sometime foolish. Therefore, it may be more useful to understand lay perceptions than merely to dismiss them (Freudenburg, 1988; Slovic, 1987).

As such several researchers have examined how and why lay estimations of risk differ from experts assessments. Researchers found that when asked to provide quantitative estimations of loss of life, lay people can provide responses reflective of experts' estimations of annual fatalities (Fischhoff et al., 1982; Lichtenstein, Slovic, Fischhoff, Layman, & Combs, 1978). But when asked about "risk," lay people reveal judgments of risk based on considerations in addition to loss of life and limb (Fischhoff, et al., 1982). Lay judgments of risks are correlated to hazard characteristics other than probabilistic data, which is often the grounding of expert risk assessments.

Slovic (1987) writes that lay people's "basic conceptualization of risk is much richer than that of the experts and reflects legitimate concerns that are typically omitted from expert risk assessments" (p. 285). Fischhoff, Slovic and Lichtenstein (1982) identified several hazard characteristics that affect the magnitude and direction of the lay person's judgments. Risks that are controllable, known, observable, and voluntary are less likely to perceived as "risky." In contrast, uncontrollable, unknown, hidden, and involuntary risks are more likely to be perceived as risky. Risks associated with new technologies, fatal consequences, and global consequences and risks whose consequences are inequitably distributed also are more likely to perceived as "risky."

Understanding hazard characteristics' impact upon risk judgments helps explain why lay people may perceive a nuclear power plant as extremely risky and household cleaning agents as safe when the latter causes more injury and death each year than the former. Household cleaner hazards are familiar and are perceived as controllable and fair.

Nuclear power, on the other hand, is a relatively new technology that is less familiar and has more potentially devastating consequences that would be imposed on innocent bystanders.

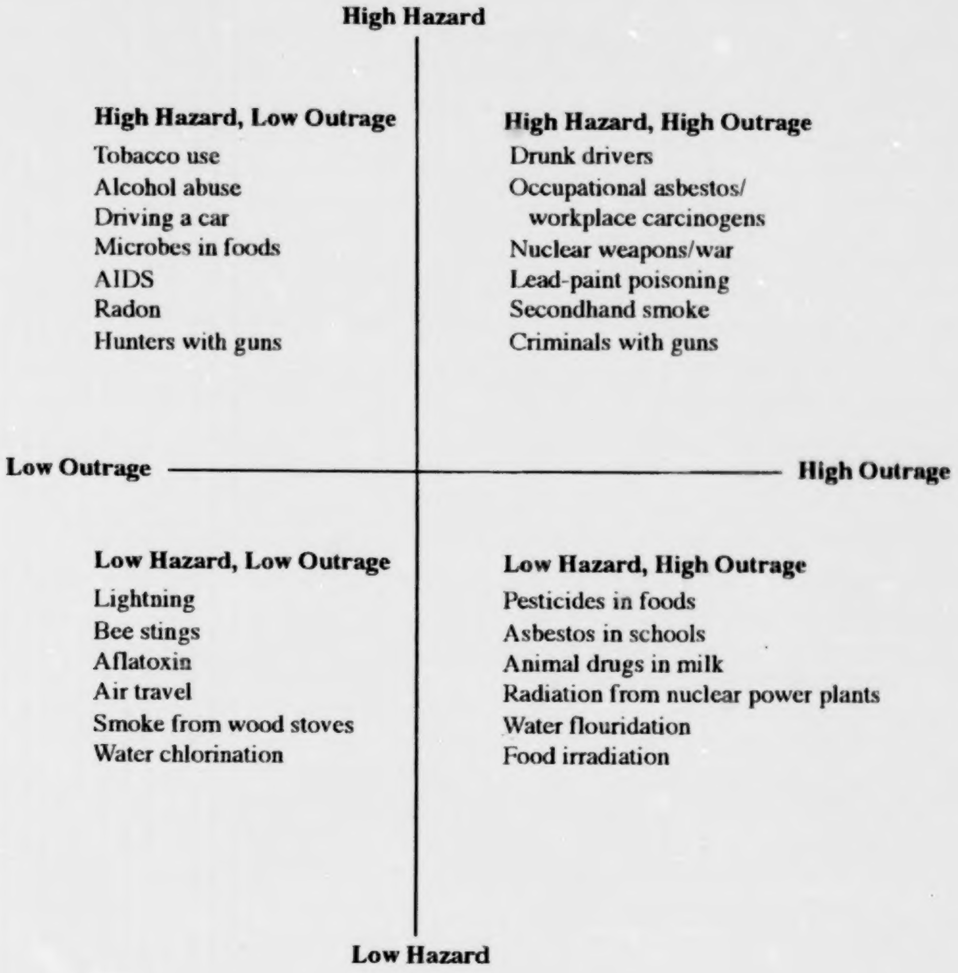
While the preceding example may lead some to argue the irrationality of lay people, Slovic (1987) uses nuclear technology as an example to show the utility of lay assessments of risk. The Three Mile Island incident resulted in no deaths and few, if any, latent fatalities. However, the result was a devastated utility, enormous costs to the nuclear industry, reliance on more expensive energy sources, greater public opposition to nuclear power and, perhaps, more hostile views toward other new and complex technologies (Slovic, 1987). In short, the Three Mile Island incident had tangible consequences that were not included among the experts' risk assessment criteria but were in lay perceptions.

Similarly, Freudenburg (1988) argues that lay people's risk judgments may be different than "expert" risk judgments because lay people may be utilizing different criteria to make risk judgments. One of those criteria is what he terms "uncertainty costs." Uncertainty costs are those incurred to deal with risk even if "nothing goes wrong" (p. 44). Such costs include maintaining emergency-preparedness systems. Worry and emotional stress about potential disasters are also uncertainty costs (Dunwoody & Neuwirth, 1991; Freudenburg, 1988). In formulating their judgements of risks, lay people may also be considering the likelihood of human error and the extent to which they trust industry experts (Dunwoody & Neuwirth, 1991; Freudenburg, 1988; Wildavsky & Dake, 1982).

In a study assessing perceptions of food irradiation, Bord and O'Connor (1990) concluded that "effective risk communication may be more a problem of ensuring trust than it is an issue of explaining risk/benefit analysis in lay terms" (p. 505). The impact of trust in the food irradiation industry, government regulatory agencies and in science itself dramatically influenced respondents' acceptance of food irradiation technologies. Focus groups revealed respondents' concerns that even flawless technical plans were subject to human error in their execution and that managing the technology would itself create serious problems.

Sandman (1987) developed a hazard/outrage model that separated the quantitative, probabilistic aspect of risk (hazard) from the value judgment, qualitative aspect of risk evaluations (outrage). His model provides a good explanation of why lay people and experts often view risk dramatically differently. Sandman identified a threat's voluntary nature, controllability, visibility, familiarity, and the diffusion of consequences in space and time as characteristics that predict outrage responses. Similar to the Fischhoff, Slovic and Lichtenstein's (1982) conceptualization of characteristics impacting intensity of perceptions of risks, Sandman (1987) found that controllable, visible, familiar, threats were less likely to evoke outrage among lay people than threats which are uncontrollable, hidden, or unfamiliar. Figure 1 visually presents several risks sorted by Sandman's hazard and outrage components.

Dunwoody & Neuwirth (1991) explored risk perception as a multi-dimensional concept. In a study examining AIDS perceptions among college students, the researchers



High Hazard, Low Outrage
Tobacco use
Alcohol abuse
Driving a car
Microbes in foods
AIDS
Radon
Hunters with guns

High Hazard, High Outrage
Drunk drivers
Occupational asbestos/ workplace carcinogens
Nuclear weapons/war
Lead-paint poisoning
Secondhand smoke
Criminals with guns

Low Hazard, Low Outrage
Lightning
Bee stings
Aflatoxin
Air travel
Smoke from wood stoves
Water chlorination

Low Hazard, High Outrage
Pesticides in foods
Asbestos in schools
Animal drugs in milk
Radiation from nuclear power plants
Water flouridation
Food irradiation

Figure 1. Selected threats sorted according to Sandman's (1987) hazard/outrage model

found that cognitive and affective dimensions emerged as separate factors. The cognitive dimension refers to how individuals assess their own likelihood of being harmed. The affective dimension refers to the dread, worry, or anxiety felt about some risk. Affective orientations were grouped into one general factor and one behavior-specific factor. Risk estimates loaded onto one cognitive factor. These researchers argued for clarification of individual-level versus societal-level referents for provided risk judgments.

Coleman (1993), drawing from the work of Dunwoody & Neuwirth (1991) and Tyler and Cook (1984), examined risk perception as two separate constructs: societal risk and personal risk. Societal risk perceptions are those that characterize and evaluate risks to society. Personal risk judgments are those that characterize and evaluate risks to the self. Coleman's (1993) study supported the well-documented tendency for individuals to assess personal levels of risk below their assessment of risk to others (societal-level risks). Across eight environmental hazards, some voluntary others involuntary, all respondents viewed others to be more at risk than themselves.

Coleman's (1993) study lent little support to Dunwoody's and Neuwirth's (1991) and Tyler's and Cook's (1984) earlier hypothesizing that channels of communication impacted perceptions of risk. Earlier hypothesizing proposed that mass mediated channels would impact perceptions of societal risk and that interpersonal channels of communication would have more impact on personal risk perceptions. Coleman (1993), in fact, concluded that the distinction between personal and societal risk judgments may not be as clear-cut as envisioned. She writes: "factors that contribute to one's personal sense of risk are not necessarily the same factors that contribute to one's view of social-level risk" (p. 623).

Otway and Wynne (1989) argue that there is no one right definition of risk and that it is both rational and normal for people to view hazards in terms of how their lives are affected (p. 141). These authors argue that the lack of attention paid to contextual and cultural influences, along with selfish motivations of risk-imposing industry, are reasons for the inherent weakness in the risk perception paradigm.

What should be overtly noted here is that the research examined under the perspective of the public as wise are psychologically-oriented perspectives. The research attempts to discover each individuals determination of risk (whether to one's self or to society at large) largely under the assumptions that such determinations are formulated internally or are individually derived. However, the theoretical models of symbolic interactionism and social construction offer an alternative approach to understanding perceptions of risk as social constructs that evolve through human interaction. Which leads us to our third understanding of the public as meaning makers.

The Public As Meaning Makers

The final view of the public examined in this essay is that of the public as meaning makers. The social interaction and social construction models posit that not only risk perceptions but all meanings are socially negotiated constructs that evolve through human interaction. Risk perception is not a simple sum or average of individually derived evaluations, but is a collective creation and expression of what is believed to be true. With the final orientation of the public as meaning makers, perceived risk *is* the meaning or "truth" of some hazard. The amount of correlation between objective observations of nature and the perceived risk is not relevant. Furthermore, to the relativist such correlations are not possible.

That "truth" is a product of society is a basic tenet of the social constructionist model. That the "truth" is constructed through interaction among individuals is a basic tenant of the social interactionism model. Murray Edelman (1988) argues that, by definition, what makes a situation political in conflict over meaning. "Any political analysis," he says, " that encourages belief in a secure, rational , and cooperative world fails the test of conformity to experience and to the record of history" (p.4). From this perspective, perceptions of risk and responses to hazards should not be viewed as rational or factual but as products of society.

According to the symbolic interactionism model, the formation of those socially constructed meanings are born from and through human interaction. Blumer (1969) argues that meaning is neither intrinsic nor a coalescence of psychological elements in the person. Rather, symbolic interactionism "sees meaning as arising in the process of interaction between people" (p. 4, Blumer, 1969). Furthermore, meaning formation is a continual process, one does not simply apply a meaning but is continually reevaluating and augmenting meaning He says:

> They [humans] live in worlds of objects and are guided in their orientation and action by the meaning of these objects. Their objects, including objects of themselves, are formed, sustained, weakened, and transformed in their interaction with one another. This general process should be seen, of course, in the differentiated character which it necessarily has by virtue of the fact that people cluster is different groups, belong to different associations, and occupy different worlds, and guide themselves by different sets of meanings. Nevertheless, whether one is dealing with a family, a boys' gang, an industrial corporation, or a

> political party, one must see that activities of the collectivity as being formed through a process of designation and interpretation. (Blumer, 1979)

This final approach to understanding risk perception as social constructions has intuitive appeal and also has been explored by numerous scholars including Johnson and Covello (1987) and Douglas and Wildavsky (1982). It provides a basis for interpreting how different cultures choose to recognize and respond to different hazards in different ways. For example, currently U.S. consumers are not in an outrage about consuming unlabeled bioengineered food products (though tension seems to be mounting), whereas European consumers are actively engaged in debates regarding the safety of genetically altered products. While providing advantages to communication scholars and professionals, social constructionist theories also strain our current methodologies and traditional communication tactics. The demand of the constructionist perspective is that communicators must become more savvy not only about the human psyche but also the larger scope of cultural norms and values in which humans continually form and reform meanings.

Conclusion

The concepts of objective, subjective, and intersubjective provide a basis to summarize the three understandings of the public and to ground the alternative conceptualizations of risk perception and the role of the communicator. Associated with the public-as-fools understanding is objectivity which dictates that no one's thoughts matter--that an absolute truth exists in nature that can be discovered. Within this perspective, risk perceptions are merely faulty determinations of an incompetent public. The communicator's challenge is to deliver expert explanations to lay people. Associated with the public-as-wise understanding is subjectivity which dictates that *one's* thoughts matter--the individual can determine truth. Within this perspective, risk perceptions are legitimate, individual determinations based on psychological elements. The communicator's challenge is to understand and alter the individual's psychological reactions and understandings of some hazard. Finally, associated with the public-as-meaning-makers understanding is intersubjectivity which dictates that ***our*** thoughts matter--that truth is a product of society. Within this perspective, risk perceptions are the product of societal meaning making. The communicator's challenge is to be a motivated participant in the social construction of meaning associated with some risk.

On a general level the social interactionism and social constructionist models are reflected in common practices of public relations. The profession acknowledges the power of perceptions, and the theme, "perception is reality," is seen from professional workshops to agency web sites. It is also a fundamental understanding among public relations professionals that certain groups of people--publics-- are likely to share meanings and respond to certain stimuli in similar ways. Issue managers bow to the notion of social construction of meaning when publicity efforts attempt to propel some issue into the public discourse. And campaigns often target opinion leaders and those influential to others as a key step in delivering some argument to a larger populace.

In the specific area of risk communication, confidence in expert assessments of risk and reliance on psychological approaches to understanding perceptions of risk often are reflected in everyday practice of communicators. Communicators often try to "educate" the public with facts and figures. Understanding of psychological aspects associated with hazards is often reflected in message strategies. For example, biotechnology advocates are quick to relate biotechnology to "natural" hybridization thereby appealing to public acceptance of "natural" hazards. Belief in the individual creation of meaning is reflected in public opinion polling which measure opinions in isolation. Similarly, message pre-testing or product-acceptance measures of individual reactions are not considering how an individual's response may be dramatically different if the respondent were among others over time. Methods of discovery that utilize focus groups, field testing, or non-invasive observations are more reflective of social construction of meaning perspective as are ethnographic methodologies.

This paper has explicated three understanding of the public and how meaning is formed. Each perspective provides alternative conceptualizations of the risk perception construct as well as alternative implications for the practice of public relations. By overtly acknowledging assumptions about publics, practitioners and scholars can expand their view of the risk perception construct and have alternative conceptualizations of the role of public relations in risk communication situations.

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The Effects of Relationships on Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Future Behavior

A Case of a Community Bank

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Abstract

Testing why relationship building contributes to an organizational bottom line is a key issue in developing relationship-building theory. The results reveal that customers who have positive relational features are less likely to switch their bank accounts whereas customers who are dissatisfied are more likely to switch their bank accounts to competitors. A customer's satisfaction and loyalty clearly influence the customer's future behavioral intention. Structural equation modeling also showed that the public may engage the relational dimension differently depending on the organization-public context.

Introduction

Relationship building has witnessed a major paradigm shift in public relations theory and practice in recent years. The public-organization relationship as a unit of analysis in public relations research has shaped the theories and practices of public relations since its introduction by Ferguson (1984). Ledingham and Bruning edited a book containing relationship management theories and applications in 2000, however the application of the new concept is still a mystery to most public relations practitioners. The subject of relationship building is still nascent and in an early stage of theory building.

Like other public relations concepts in the past, relationship management still has an identity problem and also faces pressure to prove its contribution to organizational goals. To develop an effective relationship building theory, it is necessary to demonstrate the value of relationship building to outcomes that contribute to achieving organizational goals. Testing why relationship building contributes to an organizational bottom line is a key part of developing relationship-building theory. Thus, explaining the connection between the public-organization relationship and its contribution to the organization will enhance the practical application of this new concept.

Garbarino and Johnson (1999) concluded that high relational customers decide their future intentions on the basis of trust and commitment and low relational customers make their future decisions based on overall satisfaction. Bruning and Ledingham (1998a) argued that the organization-public relationship dimensions of trust, involvement, investment, and commitment affect customer satisfaction. Fornell (1992), Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1994), and Morgan and Hunt(1994) also indicate that relationship components, attitudes, and satisfaction are closely related to each other.

The question is, how does relationship building help the organizational bottom line? Demonstrating causal associations between relational features and organizational consequences is a challenging task given the traditional notion of public relations.

The impact of building relationships on customer satisfaction imparts an important meaning to the contribution of public relations. Favorable relationships increase the level of satisfaction and satisfaction can create the bottom-line impact for the organization (Bruning & Ledingham, 1998a, b). For example, customers who have favorable relationships with the organization formulate satisfaction and craft loyalty to the organization. When customers feel satisfaction and loyalty, their future decisions will be constructive to the organization.

This study examines the interrelationships among the relationship dimensions and final organizational outcomes. Thus, the purpose of this study is to empirically investigate the effect of relationship components on customer satisfaction, loyalty, and future behavior. In essence, relationship-building theories can be strengthen and supported by connecting relational dimensions and bottom-line consequences.

Literature Review

The Organization-Public Relationship

The organization has to offer products or services that go beyond the desired level of the public's satisfaction to obtain continued instrumental benefits (Thomlison, 2000). However, loyalty to the organization involves more than economic calculation. The public's decision-making includes emotional inclination, schemas, and attitudinal preferences (Thomlison, 2000). Sometimes people choose products because they feel comfortable through continued use. Loyalty can explain this humanistic view. Loyalty represents a long-term, committed, and emotional relationship (Fournier, 1998; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998; Ledingham, Bruning & Wilson, 1999). Thus, public relations practitioners should consider both aspects of relationships to build favorable relationships with publics: offering quality products or services beyond the publics' expectation level and fostering committed relationships through empathic interchange.

When the relationship embarks, maintaining the relationship becomes crucial. Stafford and Canary (1991) suggest five maintenance strategies: positivity, assurances, openness, sharing tasks and social networks. Through these stages, related parties try to retain mutual relational features throughout the relationship. These include control mutuality (the degree that the partners agree on the power control), liking, commitment, and relational satisfaction (Canary & Stafford, 1992).

The organization-public relationship can be conceptualized as the economic and humanistic interchange between the organization and publics to obtain quality relational outcomes through optimal initiation and maintenance strategies (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998; Ledingham, Bruning, & Wilson, 1999). Relationship management also can be defined as "the development, maintenance, growth, and nurturing of mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their significant publics" (Thomlison, 2000, p. 178).

Ferguson (1984) suggested that public relations practitioners use the following tools to evaluate the quality of an organization's relationship with the public: dynamic vs.

static, open vs. closed, mutual satisfaction, distribution of power and mutual understanding, agreement and consensus. Grunig and Ehling (1992) suggested reciprocity, trust, credibility, mutual legitimacy, openness, mutual satisfaction, and mutual understanding as the key elements of the organization-public relationship. Bruning and Ledingham (1997) suggested five organization-public relationship indicators: open communication, the level of trust, the level of involvement, investment in the communities and long-term commitment.

Hon and Grunig (1999) summarized maintenance features of interpersonal relationships and outcomes of relationships from the interpersonal and public relations literature. They include positivity, openness, assurance, networking, sharing of tasks, trust, control mutuality, commitment, satisfaction, communal relationship, and exchange relationship. Grunig and Huang (2000) suggested some indicators to evaluate the organization-public relationships. With regard to maintenance strategies, they suggest that disclosure, assurance of legitimacy, and participation in mutual networks can be used. They also suggest five relationship features such as trust, control mutuality, commitment, and satisfaction from the extensive outcome features.

Kim (2001) collected and factor-analyzed all possible items to crystallize the organization-public relationship from the interpersonal, relationship marketing, and public relations literature. This study developed a valid and reliable four-dimension scale with 16 items for measuring the organization-public relationship through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The four dimensions include trust, commitment, local and community involvement, and reputation.

Although relationship marketing mainly deals with the customers as opposed to a variety of publics surrounding an organization, its theoretical framework provides helpful insights for refining the organization-public relationship. Relationship marketing theorists have become increasingly aware of the value of developing and retaining relationships with existing customers in that repeated transactions are more efficient than development of new customers in terms of estimated costs and bottom line contributions to an organization. Relationship marketing states that three constructs – trust, commitment, satisfaction- are central in predicting future behavioral characteristics.

Trust generally is a fundamental component for beneficial relationships between two parties (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Morgan and Hunt (1994, p.23) define trust as the perception of "confidence in the exchange partner's reliability and integrity." In the organization-public relationship, trust is the underlying construct that results in favorable relationships. Hon and Grunig (1999, p.19) define trust as "one party's level of confidence and willingness to open oneself to the other party." They itemize further dimensions of trust as integrity, competence and dependability (Hon & Grunig, 1999). A trustworthy reputation is important in that it affects publics around the issues, products or services originated by an organization.

Similar to trust, commitment has been recognized as an essential component for favorable relationships (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Moorman and Zaltman (1992, p.316) define commitment as "an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship." Hon and Grunig (1999, p.20) define commitment as "the extent to which one party believes and feels that the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote." They itemize commitment as continuance commitment (action) and affective commitment (emotion). In maintaining relationships between an organization and customers, the continuance commitment is more important in the context of relationship marketing, in that behavioral outcomes should follow. In addition to trust and commitment, other components were considered interchangeably. Those include community involvement, reputation, control mutuality, and satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Future Intention

Defining Customer Satisfaction

Several similar definitions should be differentiated before conceptualizing customer satisfaction. Yi (1990) also tried to differentiate consumer satisfaction from attitudes, product performance, and emotions, even though they are deeply related to each other. Level of satisfaction is the comparative measure relative to expectations. However, attitudes, product performance, and emotions are not comparative measures (Westbrook & Oliver, 1981). Customers can feel satisfaction even though they do not possess entirely favorable attitudes toward product performance. However, attitudes or emotions become predispositions to guide the level of satisfaction. Customer satisfaction can be defined as "the integration between the attitudinal evaluation toward product performance and comparative measures of the evaluation to expectations about purchase experience." Some studies applied this integrated view to relate the confirmation/disconfirmation of expectations to the evaluation of product performance.

Yi (1990) introduced key antecedents of customer satisfaction such as expectation, disconfirmation, perceived performance, and prior attitudes. Expectation and objective confirmation (the difference between expectation and objective performance) and prior attitudes are pre-consumption perceptions and perceived performance and subjective disconfirmation (the difference between expectation and perceived performance) are post-consumption perceptions. These key variables are related closely in influencing customer satisfaction. However, the effects of raising expectations and prior attitudes on customer satisfaction are mixed. Raising expectations can work positively by increasing perceived performance, but work negatively by increasing the magnitude of disconfirmation (Anderson, 1973; Oliver 1981).

The impact of setting expectations is a complicated issue. The difference between customers' expectations and perceived performance can define the level of dissatisfaction. However, having a favorable expectation or attitude can enlarge the latitude of acceptance and reduce complaints. The relationship between expectations and disconfirmation is not solid enough. Some studies claimed that raising expectations has nothing to do with the level of disconfirmation (Oliver and Linda, 1981; Westbrook and Reilly, 1983). Also the circular nature of customer satisfaction is imperative to understanding. Favorable expectations and attitudes may function positively toward the formation of customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction may result in favorable expectations and attitudes. Thus, in the long-term relationship-building perspective, raising customer expectations and favorable attitudes can create better customer satisfaction even though some backlashes of raising expectations are possible in the short-term.

Boulding, Staeline, Kalar, and Zeithaml (1993) differentiated a transaction-specific customer satisfaction and cumulative customer satisfaction. The transaction-specific satisfaction focuses on the discrete evaluative measure of the post-purchase experience. It includes instant evaluations of purchase experience and emotional reactions. However, cumulative customer satisfaction implies an overall experience through the long-term consumption experience (Anderson, Fornell, and Lehmann, 1994; Fornell, 1992). Cumulative customer satisfaction is "a more fundamental indicator of the firm's past, current, and future performance" (Anderson, et al, 1994, p. 54).

Yi (1990) also differentiated an outcome-oriented customer satisfaction and a process-oriented customer satisfaction. Outcome-oriented customer satisfaction implies the level of satisfaction after experiencing particular products or services (Oliver, 1981). Process-oriented customer satisfaction emphasizes an evaluative process between prior expectations and actual performance. Yi puts more weight on process-oriented customer satisfaction (Day, 1984). However, both outcome and process customer satisfaction are intertwined and influence each other in the long-term perspective. Customer satisfaction can be defined as an overall evaluation of the firm's performance based on the outcome and process satisfaction in the context of relationship building. Thus, the overall level of satisfaction through long-term experience should measure customer satisfaction with the firm (Garbrino & Johnson, 1999).

Relationship to Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Future Intention

Outcome and process satisfaction should be equally emphasized in the perspective of long-term relationship building. Also, the relationship between the organization and its customers influences both transactional and organizational customer satisfaction.

Yi (1990) listed complaint behaviors, word-of-mouth effects, and repeat purchase behaviors as post-customer-satisfaction behaviors. These post-customer-satisfaction behaviors may formulate the level of relationship between the organization and customers in the long term. As previously explained, the long-term relationship between the organization and its customers influences the level of customer satisfaction even though high expectations may result in disconfirmation or discomfort with the organization in the short term.

Bruning and Ledingham (1998a, b) argued that the organization-public relationship is related closely to consumer satisfaction and the level of consumer satisfaction is affected by the relationship with the organization. Favorable relationships formulate positive perceptions and satisfaction. They further insisted that this state leads to consumer loyalty in the long run. Morgan and Hunt (1994) also inferred that trust and commitment are deciding factors of customer attitudes. As explained, trust and commitment connotes the importance of the long-term relationship between the organization and publics, including consumers.

Garbarino and Johnson (1999) insisted on the different roles of satisfaction, trust, and commitment in customer relationships. In the high relationship group, trust and commitment have more influence on future intentions than overall satisfaction. And in the low relationship group, overall satisfaction is a primary intermediating variable between prior attitudinal components and future intentions. This result indirectly implies that satisfaction is more elastic in the low relationship group than in the high relationship group. Relational components such as trust and commitment play more important roles in the high relationship group. Customers can be satisfied with the organization through relationship building.

Satisfaction is a necessary component for loyalty formation. However, satisfaction does not guarantee loyalty. Thus, the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty is inconclusive (Oliver, 1999). Oliver defined loyalty as "a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future." Also, loyalty is defined generally as the intention of repeat purchasing or no switching behavior (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978).

Building relationships with customers can increase their level of satisfaction and loyalty. The satisfaction and loyalty aroused may prevent customers from switching to other companies or service providers. However, loyalty needs more than satisfaction. Griffin (1995) proposed emotional attachment and repeat patronage as the two most important components of customer loyalty. Thus, the dimension of relationship satisfaction and loyalty is inconclusive.

The fundamental premise of successful relationships is to bring favorable outcomes to organizations. Relational features affect consumers greatly in determining their future behavior whether they continue the relationship or terminate the established relationship. When it comes to the context of company-customer relationships, customers' satisfaction and evaluation of the company's service or products greatly affect future behavior. The value of organization-public relationship is documented as well. Huang (2000) showed that a favorable relationship with community can mediate possible conflicts and result in cost efficient resolving of problematic issues.

Proposed Model

The proposed model showcases how relational features affect behavioral outcomes. Ledingham and Bruning (2001) demonstrated that freshman college students' favorable relational perception toward the university results in staying at the same university, not transferring to another university. Huang (2001) theorizes that a favorable organizational-public relationship mediates possible conflicts with the local community around an ongoing issue. On the basis of these findings, the study hypothesizes that organizational-public relationships have an effect on the customers' overall evaluation (satisfaction and loyalty). The overall evaluation of customers affects the future behavioral outcomes (future intention) in the context of local bank-customer relationships.

The value of the organizational-public relationship should be evidenced in the ultimate behavioral outcome. Extensive relationship management literature supports that the value of relationship leads to favorable outcomes such as the decision to continue the relationship rather than terminate the relationship (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Thus, this study examines the causal relationships among the variables, drawing the following hypotheses:

H_1 : The relational components (trust, commitment, corporate community involvement, corporate reputation) positively affect overall customer satisfaction.

H_2 : The relational components (trust, commitment, corporate community involvement, corporate reputation) positively affect customer loyalty toward the organization.

H_3 : Students customers with a high level of satisfaction will continue dealing with the same bank even after they graduate from the university.

H_4 : Students customers with a high level of loyalty will stay with the same bank even after they graduate from the university.

Figure 1 presents a summary of a proposed structural model for customers, including the relational dimensions of trust, commitment, community involvement and reputation, the mediation of loyalty and satisfaction on future behavioral decisions.

Insert Figure 1 About Here

Method

Participants

The data came from a survey of college students in a large southeastern university. This study dealt with local bank-customer relationships. The primary customers of the southeastern university-centered bank are college students. All the participants had bank accounts at various local banks as well as the outside area. Thus, the college students were treated as customers of local banks.

The sample consisted of 205 undergraduate students. Their ages ranged from 19 to 36 years with a mean of 20.5 years and a standard deviation of 2.14. Most of the participants were females (73%) and males were 23 percent. Participation was on a voluntary basis and those who participated received extra credits in a required course. All college students have at least one bank account in the local community or elsewhere. Participants were asked to provide their perceptions and future intentions toward the local banks where they have bank accounts.

Measures

The survey contains six relationship measurement scales (Beatty & Kahle, 1988; Hon & Grunig, 1999; Kim, 2001). These scales measure the perception of customers toward their local bank. Trust, commitment, community involvement and reputation are exogenous variables. Also three endogenous variables were measured to determine the effect of exogenous variables. Endogenous variables include satisfaction, loyalty and future intention toward the local bank.

Trust. To measure the extent to which a student perceives trust for the bank, a student was asked to indicate the degree of trust they perceived. Responses were on a 7-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree. There were six items to measure trust such as "the local bank can be relied on to keep its promises" (Hon & Grunig, 1999)

Commitment. Hon and Grunig's 5-item commitment scale was used to measure commitment of the organization to its public. Responses were evaluated on a scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree.

Community involvement. Kim (2001) suggested community involvement needs to be noted when measuring the organizational-public relationship since the public is more likely to evaluate the bank's involvement in the local community. Kim's 3-item scale was used to measure the community involvement.

Reputation. Kim (2001) also suggested organizational reputation affect the public's overall perception of an organization. Established perceptions in the minds of members of the public influence the public's attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. The instrument includes a 4-item scale that was used to measure the overall bank reputation.

Satisfaction. Overall satisfaction scale was measured by a conventional 7-point

Likert scale using two items. The scale ranged from 1=very unsatisfied to 7=very satisfied.

Loyalty. Loyalty items were evolved from a review of marketing literature (Beatty & Kahle, 1988) on brand loyalty. Two items were formulated to represent a composite of perceptions of loyalty (e.g., "I consider myself to be highly loyal to the bank"). A 7-point Likert scale was used to measure the construct.

Future intention. Future behavioral outcome was measured by asking customers' future intention based on present perceptions and relational features. Two items measured their future intentions whether to stay or leave the present bank (e.g., "what would be your choice about your future relationship with the bank after you graduate?"). A 7-point Likert scale was used with lower numbers suggesting they would stay with current bank, a higher number suggesting, they would switch banks.

Analysis

A structural equation model was designed to test the model including observed and latent variables together. One advantage of structural equation modeling (SEM) is that it allows the simultaneous testing of the measurement model and structural model. It is useful to first check the measurement model to determine whether the tests measure what they were intended to, before looking at the more intricate structural model. The computer program LISREL 8.5 (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 2001) was used to perform all SEM analysis. Lisrel 8.5 was used to analyze the structural equation model. GFI, CFI, RMSEA, NNFI, and NFI were used as the fitting index.

Results

All the participants had at least one bank account. Thirty-three students had two bank accounts (16.1%). More than half of the participants had their bank accounts in the Bank of America (58.5%), followed by Campus Credit Union (10.2%) and First Union (7.3%). The descriptive statistics of the variables are shown in Table 1, which summarizes the means and correlations among observed variables.

Insert Table 1 About Here

For the first phase analysis, rotated exploratory factor analysis extracted 6 factors, comprising 22 items. Unlike the theoretical model, the rotated exploratory factor analysis yielded trust, commitment, community involvement, reputation, loyalty, and future intention. Proposed satisfaction fell on the loyalty factor. Thus the exploratory factor analysis can yield a comparable structural model as opposed to the proposed model, which consisted of a six-factor model. Figure 2 represents the comparable model based on the exploratory factor analysis.

Insert Figure 2 About Here

The proposed model was tested with standardized coefficients from the maximum likelihood (ML) method of estimation. Inspection of the fit statistics for the proposed model reveals that the model proved to be acceptable because index values were moderately high (Chi-square=163.23, d.f.=74, p=.000, RMSEA=.077, NFI=.92, NNFI=.93, CFI=.95, GFI=.90). With a large sample size, the chi-square is usually significant, even though a non-significant chi-square has been recommended. Thus, significant level was acceptable given the sample size.

Insert Figure 3 About Here

Insert Figure 4 About Here

The exploratory factor analysis suggests that the commitment variable can be explained by the trust variable. Thus, figure 4 summarizes the comparable model, which consisted of six latent variables. The revised model also added the path from satisfaction to customer loyalty based on modification indices. The overall fit indexes showed better levels of goodness of fit than the proposed model due to reduction of paths (Chi-square=141.30, d.f.=78, p=.000, RMSEA=.064, NFI=.93, NNFI=.96, CFI=.97, GFI=0.91). All fit indexes showed acceptable level.

In a structural equation model, there are rules of thumb to decide the appropriate model, which is consistent with the data. First, the chi-square difference test can be used to evaluate the degree of improvement of the model. If the chi-square difference is statistically significant, the model with a lower chi-square is preferred. Second, the addition or deletion of paths among the latent variables should be supported by the theoretical framework or previous studies.

Table 2. Two-model comparison

	Chi-square	d.f.	RMSEA	NFI	NNFI	CFI	RMR	GFI	SRMR
Target Model	163.23	74	0.077	0.92	0.93	0.95	0.048	0.90	0.048
Revised Model	141.30	78	0.064	0.93	0.96	0.97	0.045	0.91	0.045

The chi-square difference was test and showed that there is a significant difference between the two models (chi-square difference=163.23-141.30=21.93, d.f. difference= 78-74=4, p<. 05). Therefore we can reject that the proposed model suggested by previous studies and prefer the revised model. Three exogenous variables (trust, community involvement, and corporate reputation) do not seem to avert the previous framework in terms of organization-public relationship measurement. Therefore, the results of this analysis suggest that the revised model represents more adequately the sample data. In the measurement model, the overall high coefficient between relational dimension (trust, community involvement, reputation) and observed variables (indicators) showed that the indicators adequately measure the latent variables.

The standardized path coefficient revealed that customer satisfaction (β=0.57) and customer loyalty (β=0.51) had a strong positive influence on future behavioral decisions, which means that the more subjects feel loyal toward their current bank the more likely they are to stay with that bank (7-point Likert scale, 1= more likely to switch, 7 = more likely to stay). One negative lambda (λ=-.039) of loyalty on loyalty$_2$ (indicator) was noticeable in the revised model. Since the question item was reversed, which means 1 is less likely to switch their banks and 7 means they are more likely to switch their banks, the negative λ (=-0.039) can be interpreted. In sum, the data demonstrated that all the hypotheses were supported with positive loadings and significant path coefficient. Even though the target model showed similar results, the revised model was more parsimonious than the target model and showed better goodness of fit indexes.

Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to test the role of customers' satisfaction and loyalty on future behavioral intention in the context of a bank-customer relationship. Based on relationship marketing and organization-public relationship measurement scales, this study tested the interrelationship among relational dimension, customer loyalty, customer satisfaction and future behavioral decision.

Results from structural equation modeling revealed that satisfaction and loyalty mediated the link between relational dimensions and future behavioral outcomes. In other words, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty were both predictors and exogenous variables in the model. Customers who perceived the bank as trustworthy were more likely to stay with the current bank even after they graduate from the university. Interestingly, the path coefficients from community involvement to customer satisfaction (β=.01) and to loyalty (β=.11) were not high compared to other coefficients. It is probable that the customers are more likely to prioritize the service and benefits provided by the bank, given the characteristics of banking service. In the exploratory factor analysis, the items of trust and the items of commitment overlapped with moderate levels. This indicates that the customers perceive the two variables (trust, corporate commitment) similarly. However, customers perceived clearly community involvement and corporate reputation as a distinct dimension when they evaluated their relationship with the organization.

Results indicated that the relational characteristics clearly influenced on the future behavioral outcome The influence was observed in that more than two-thirds of the participants with satisfaction of the service (Mean =5.23 in 7-point scale, 72%) would stay with the current bank. The data also showed that customer loyalty affect on the future decision (β=0.51). Interestingly community involvement showed a lower influence on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty than the trust dimension. This finding was not surprising given the characteristics of organization-customer relationship in service industries such as banking. In the context of bank-customer relationship, service quality assessment explained by trust dimension has more explaining power than other variables.

More than ever public relations practitioners are asked to demonstrate the value of public relations in contributing to bottom line in organizational objectives. The rise of a new paradigm - relationship management - has shifted the long-established concept of public relations in seeking the more essential values of public relations. The new paradigm of relationship management stems from the fact that the public relations practitioners began to realize the amount of publicity in the news media does not necessarily ensure the success of organizational goals. The value of public relations should bring forth favorable outcomes in a given organizational situation. The new perspective fundamentally seeks the value of public relations in the context of final outcomes such as behavioral impact. Thus, it is imperative for public relations practitioners to demonstrate the value of organizational-public relationships by demonstrating the impact of organizational-public relationships on behavioral outcomes or the bottom line of organizational goals. The study sought empirical evidence from the relational dimension to behavioral decisions in a bank-customer relationship setting. In short, positive relationship building is driven by the fact that maintaining continuous relationship is less costly and more profitable than it is to acquire new customers. The results of the study reveal that the relational evaluations affect the future intention whether the customers would maintain or terminate the current relationship.

In sum, it seems that customers who have positive relational features are less likely to switch from the banks their accounts are in, whereas customers who are dissatisfied are more likely to switch their bank accounts to competitors. Although all the relationship measures were not utilized to measure the relationships, key relational features (trust, community involvement, corporate reputation) adequately represent the conceptual organizational-public relationship based on marketing literature and public relationship literature (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Kim, 2001). The present evidence that relational features have an indirect relationship with future intention is consistent with a recent study of relationship literature (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999), which indicates that overall satisfaction and customer loyalty have a mediating impact on future intention.

Grunig and Huang (2000) argue that one problem faced by public relations is the tendency to focus on process indicators such as counting news clippings rather than on outcome behaviors. While the value of the organizational-public relationship has been increasingly discussed over the past years, quantifying the value of public relations is still a challenging task for public relations practitioners (Bruning & Lambe, 2001). The results of this study help to demonstrate the value of favorable relationships quantitatively. Disseminating organizational information and media publicity efforts are not necessarily sufficient to result in behavioral outcomes such as buying service or products or staying with an organization as customers.

The results of the present study reveal that building and maintaining relationships with publics enhances customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, eventually resulting in positive behavioral outcomes.

Several conclusions can be drawn on the basis of these results. Customer satisfaction and loyalty mediate relational features that affect future behavioral outcomes. The more customers are satisfied with their current bank, the less likely they are to switch, even in a new environment. Similarly, the more loyalty they feel to the bank, the less likely they are to switch banks. The positive path coefficients clearly demonstrate the impact of these two mediated variables on future intention.

The impact of community involvement on customer satisfaction is not influential compared to other dimensions. These results indicate that organizational-public relationships can vary depending on the context of these relationships. For example treating patients respect and giving patients with respect and giving them positive interpersonal interactions is important in hospital-patient relationship building (Peltier, 1998). In this study, it is possible that the customers valued trust and corporate reputation more than other dimensions. Given the characteristics of bank service, service quality and rewarding benefits are more important criteria than other dimensions for customers when evaluating their relationship. Thus it can be assumed that customers will vary in the context of which they wish to develop commercial relationship.

An overlapping measurement problem may arise when using existing relationship scales when applying different organization-public relationship. For example, the exploratory factor analysis indicated that the great variance in commitment could be explained by trust measures. Thus, depending on the industry or organization type, the relationship measurement scale needs to be refined further.

Public relations practitioners can quantify evidence of effects of public relationships by using the public's intangible perceptions of an organization. While it is impossible to quantify all aspects of the relational status with a certain public, the practice of quantifying the evidence of public relationships would provide a solid foundation for public relations practitioners.

Several limitations need to be noted. Although the present study tested the interrelationships among the variables, the testing context is limited to one single case, which is the bank-customer relationship. The limited setting makes it difficult to generalize to the overall organization-public relationships. Moreover, using college students as local bank customers may weaken the genearalizability of the study.

Second, this study did not include the competitor variable. The availability of competitors may greatly influence future decision making when choosing services or products. In marketing literature, the variable of availability of alternatives is critical variable when assessing customers' future decisions. Also, the emotional cost and effort seeking alternatives, from the perspective of customers, were not included in the present study.

Third, more and more customers are using online banking. The new technology and the Internet facilitate the new form of relational interaction. Studying only face-to-face communication is not sufficient. Further study is necessary to examine the new interactions under the new environment.

The relationship between future behavior and relational dimension is a function of multiple variables across a wide variety of interactions between two parties.

Future research can examine relational impacts on behavioral outcomes in the context of other organizational-public relationships settings such as organization-media and organization-community. Also, more research is necessary to validate the value of building relationships, linking relationship building and behavioral outcomes.

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Figure 1 Target Model

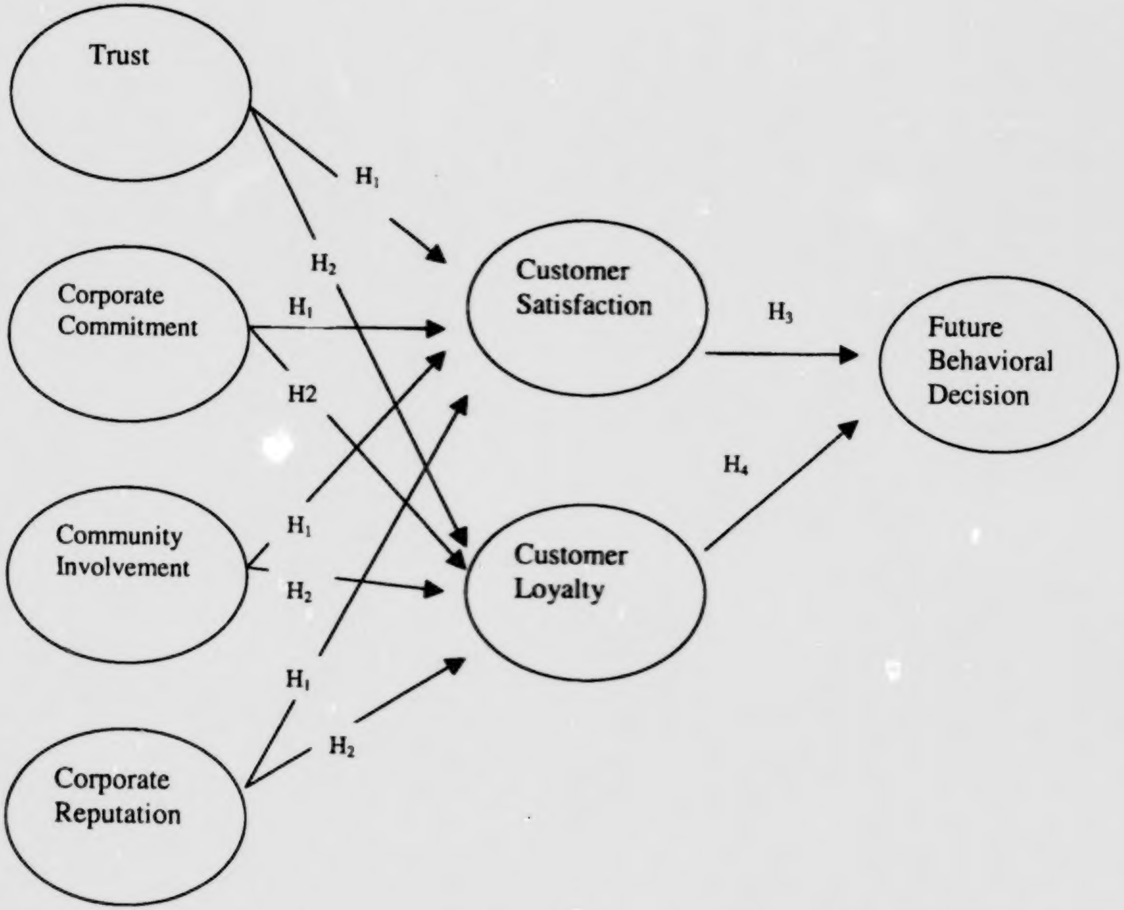
Trust
Corporate Commitment
Community Involvement
Corporate Reputation
Customer Satisfaction
Customer Loyalty
Future Behavioral Decision
H_1
H_2
H_1
H2
H_1
H_2
H_1
H_2
H_3
H_4

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Figure 2. Revised Model (Rival Model)

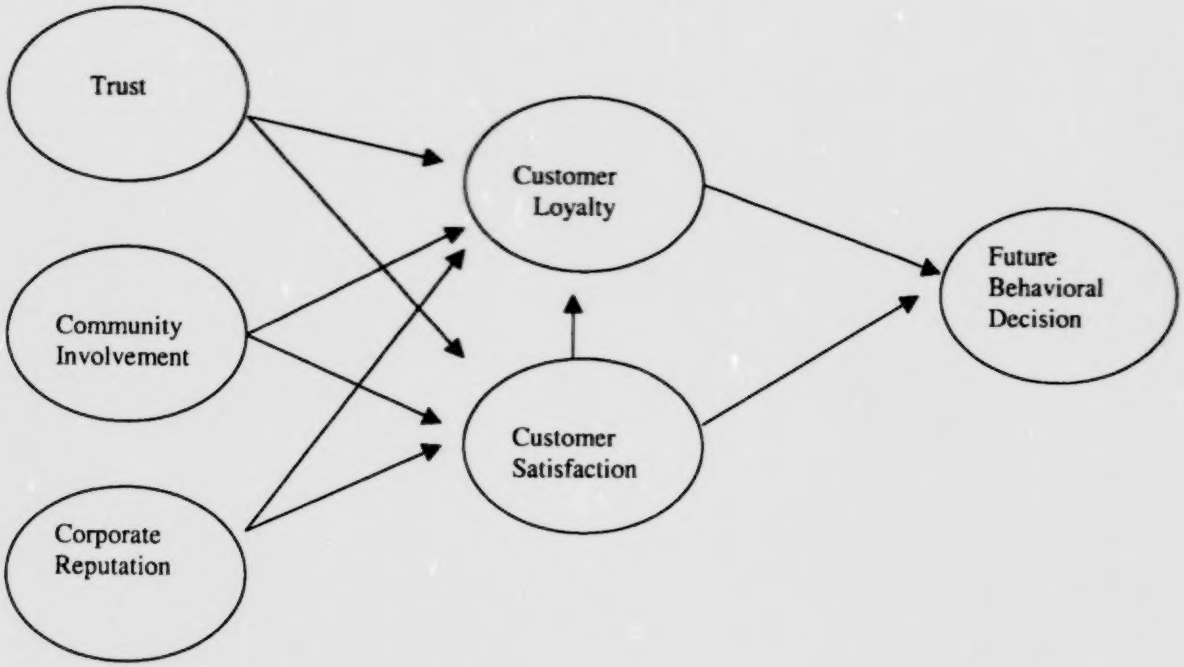
Trust
Community Involvement
Corporate Reputation
Customer Loyalty
Customer Satisfaction
Future Behavioral Decision

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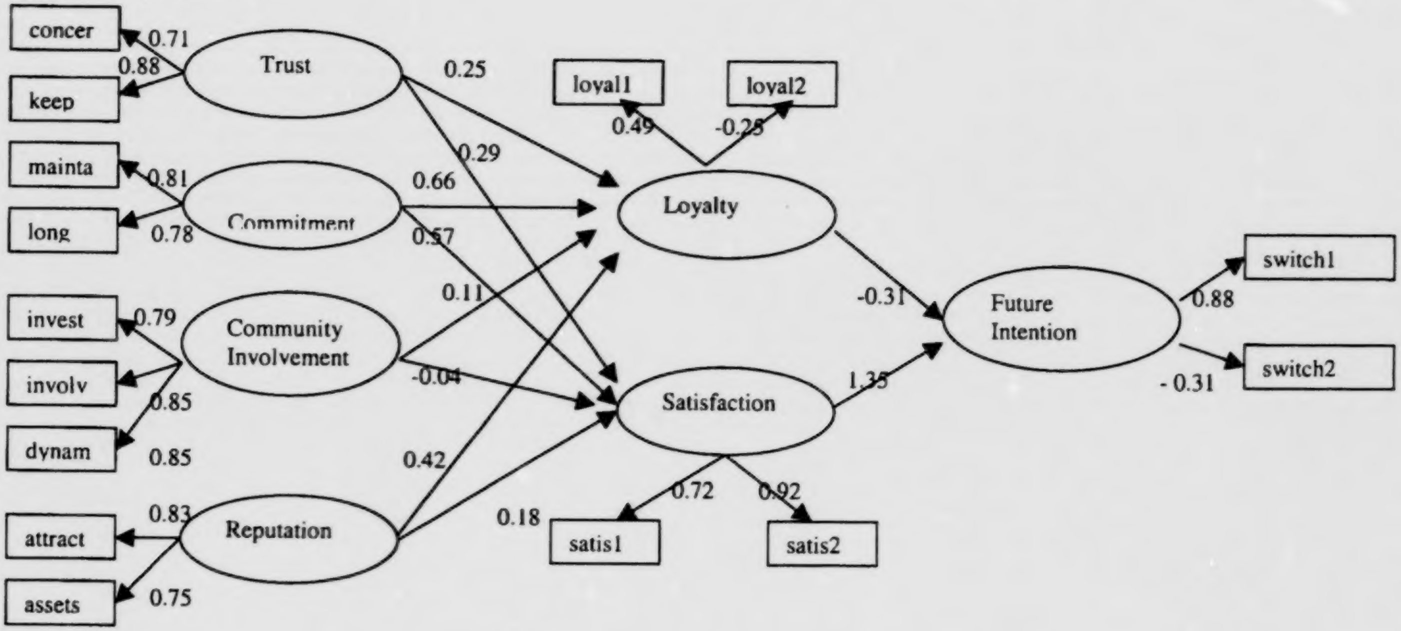
Figure 3. Proposed Model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Community Involvement
Reputation
0.71
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0.85
0.85
0.83
0.75
0.25
0.29
0.66
0.57
0.11
-0.04
0.42
0.18
loyal1
loyal2
0.49
-0.25
Loyalty
Satisfaction
0.72
0.92
satis1
satis2
-0.31
1.35
Future Intention
0.88
- 0.31
switch1
switch2

Chi-square=163.23, d.f.=74, p=.000, RMSEA=0.077, NFI=0.92, NNFI=0.93, CFI=0.95, RMR=0.048, GFI=0.90

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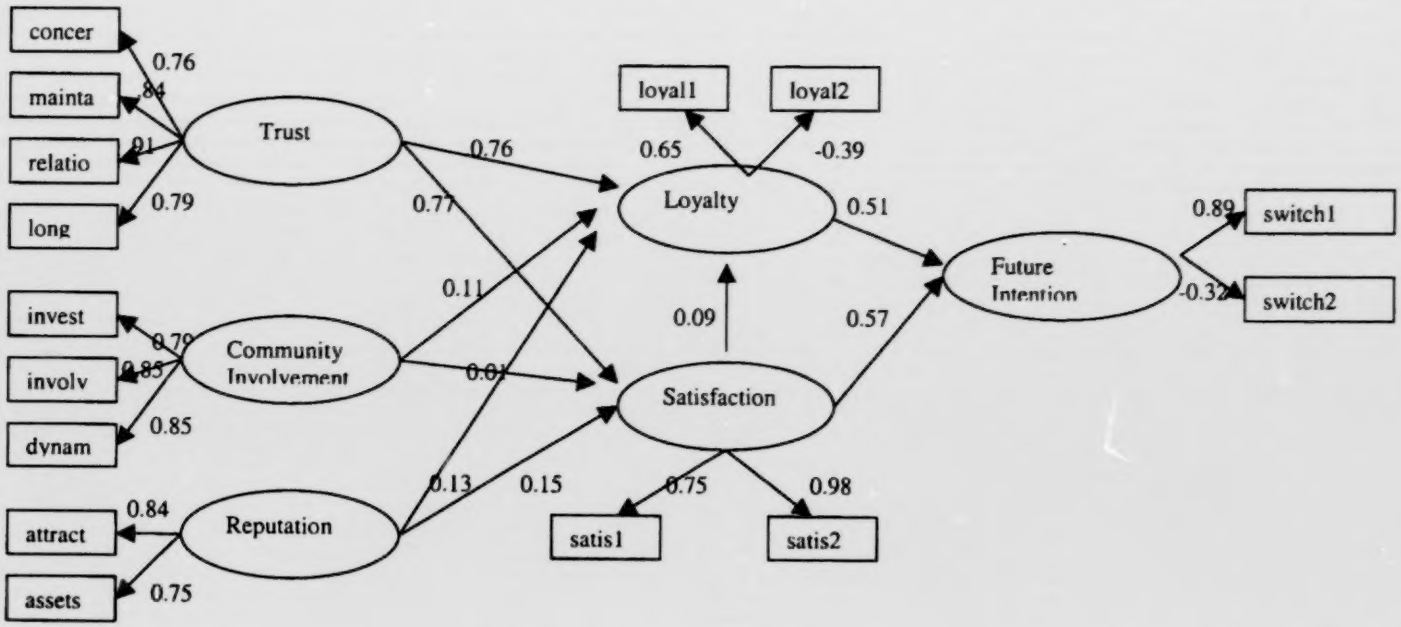
Figure 4. Revised Model



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Community Involvement
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0.84
0.75
Reputation
0.76
0.77
0.11
0.01
0.13
0.15
loyal1
loyal2
0.65
-0.39
Loyalty
0.09
Satisfaction
0.75
0.98
satis1
satis2
0.51
0.57
Future Intention
0.89
-0.32
switch1
switch2

Chi-square=141.30, d.f.=78, p=.000, RMSEA=0.064, NFI=0.93, NNFI=0.96, CFI=0.97, RMR=0.045, GFI=0.91

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Table 1

Correlation, Means and Standard Deviation Among Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. concern	4.53	1.47	1.0															
2. keep	5.20	1.39	.67	1.0														
3. maintain	5.16	1.41	.65	.73	1.0													
4. relation	4.48	1.48	.62	.65	.74	1.0												
5. long	4.50	1.51	.59	.67	.64	.69	1.0											
6.invest	4.37	1.49	.29	.34	.36	.32	.29	1.0										
7.involvement	4.10	1.77	.29	.24	.28	.27	.23	.68	1.0									
8.dynamic	4.28	1.52	.39	.34	.29	.32	.29	.66	.73	1.0								
9.attract	4.68	1.19	.36	.48	.32	.33	.38	.30	.24	.38	1.0							
10.assets	4.74	1.21	.40	.48	.42	.40	.40	.39	.28	.38	.55	1.0						
11.satis1	5.16	1.41	.42	.48	.48	.42	.43	.18	.13	.20	.32	32	1.0					
12.satis2	1.98	.56	-.19	-.31	-.26	-.28	-.27	-.06	-.16	-.17	-.17	-.19	-.34	1.0				
13.loyalty1	3.54	1.18	.40	.45	.41	.34	.36	.21	.14	.24	.25	.29	.56	-.29	1.0			
14.loyalty2	3.01	1.25	.59	.67	.80	.66	.59	.37	.28	.34	.34	.39	.40	-.26	.42	1.0		
15.swicth1	3.33	1.02	.23	.32	.27	.27	.22	.17	.11	.20	.14	.06	.22	-.15	.24	.28	1.0	
16.switch2	1.98	.56	-.21	-.24	-.25	-.18	-.21	-.17	-.15	-.14	-.01	-.10	-.32	.33	-.21	-.16	-.19	1.0

Appendix. Measurement Items (variable name)

1. Whenever the bank makes an important decision, I know it will be concerned about customers like me. (concern).
2. The bank can be relied on to keep its promises (keep).
3. I feel that the bank is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to customers (maintain).
4. I can see that the bank wants to maintain a relationship with customers like me (relation).
5. There is a long-lasting bond that the bank and customers like me (long).
6. The bank seems to be the kind of company that invests in my local community (invest).
7. I am aware that the bank is involved in my local community (involvement).
8. I think the bank is very dynamic in maintaining good relationship with a local community (dynamic).
9. The bank has the ability to attract, develop, and keep talented people (attract).
10. The bank uses corporate visible and invisible assets very effectively (assets).

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11. Overall, you are satisfied with the quality of the service provided by the bank compared to other bank you have experiences (satis1)
12. I am satisfied with the relationship the bank has established with customers (satis2).
13. I consider my self to he highly loyal to the bank (loyal1)
14. If my preferred bank were not available in the new location, it would make little difference to me if I had to choose another bank (loyal2)
15. Considering all perception and experiences, I would stay with the bank even after I graduate (swicth1).
16. When another bank provide better quality, I will generally switch it than my preferred bank (swicth2).

PR

In the Face of Change:
A Case Study of the World Wide Web as a Public Relations Tool for Art Museums

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Abstract

As we become even more immersed in the Information Age, a key question for those in the museum public relations field is: What is the impact of the Internet, and in particular the World Wide Web, on the traditional role of museums? This case study uses in-depth interviews, a Web site analysis and a museum visitor study to explore the status of the Web as a public relations tool for an existing art museum.

Introduction

As the Western appreciation of art forms matured during the Renaissance, man began to accumulate and display such objects. Historically, collections of rare and beautiful objects were accessible only to the elite members of society. It was not until 1753 that a Parliamentary Act, institutionalizing the will of Sir Hans Sloane, who had left his collection of books and rarities to the nation of England, established the British Museum as the first modern, public museum.

Museums, now commonplace, are often one of the first destinations of tourists, who are able to see systematically organized, labeled, and preserved collections. In the United States alone there are more than 8,200 museums, which collectively receive more than 865 million visits per year, have an operating budget of more than five billion dollars, and employ more than 125,000 people in full-time, paid positions (http://www.aam-us.org).

As we become even more immersed in the Information Age, a key question for those in the museum public relations field is: What is the impact of the Internet, and in particular the World Wide Web, on the traditional role of museums? In fact, the Internet is becoming so widely used by museums that in October of 2000 the Museum Domain Management Association (MuseDoma), a nonprofit organization founded by the ICOM and the J. Paul Getty Trust, submitted an application to the Internet Cooperation for Assigned Names and Number (ICANN) requesting the establishment of a *.museum* top level domain (TLD). Although this TLD has been accepted, it is not yet active as there are a number of other phases to the approval process including approval by the U.S. Department of Commerce (Press Release, 2000).

Today, the Web is cited as the most important component of the Internet because it provides a "simple and intuitive navigation of Internet sites through a graphical interface" (http://www.britannica.com). Since its inception in 1993, the Web's influence has extended into all spheres, including that of professional, academic, and personal. The public relations profession is no exception. In past years, the primary public relations tools were a typewriter and the telephone, "But the explosion of digital technologies, particularly the Web, with its unprecedented potential for interactivity, has changed the situation dramatically" (At the Crossroads, 2001, p. 25). In fact, some consider the Web to be the first controlled public relations mass media in that "… it allows managed communication to flow directly between organizations and mass audiences without the gatekeeping function of other mass media; content is not filtered by journalists and editors" (White and Raman, 1999, p. 406). White and Raman further argue, "Before the advent of the World Wide Web, advertising was the only means to send a controlled message to a mass audience through a mass medium (1999, p. 406). Given the mission of public relations this is especially significant considering that the expansion of the Internet into American homes has been phenomenal. In December 2000, 41.5 percent of American households had Internet access, up from 26.2 percent in 1999 (Newspaper Numbers, 2000).

In 1964, Marshall McLuhan made his now famous statement, "the medium is the message" (p. ix). McLuhan's statement is most often interpreted to mean that "the development of a medium affects our society and shapes our perceptions more than any individual message carried in the medium" (Baker-Woods, 1997, p. 7). A corollary of McLuhan's statement is that in the dawn of the Internet Age, we cannot predict the full impact of the medium; however, we can already see its affects on traditional means of communication. The newspaper is a prime example. Millions of people rely on the newspaper to provide news, editorials, analysis, entertainment, advertisements, and photographs depicting the world around them. Although traditional print newspapers are still quite popular, the medium is in the process of transformation. More than 3,400 U.S. newspapers now have online versions; with new outlets launching sites daily, it is almost impossible to get an accurate count (http://www.ajr.newslink.org/news.html). A complicating factor in assessing the Internet's impact is that, according to Terence Riley, chief curator of the Department of Architecture and Design at The Museum of Modern Art in New

York, "Historically, new media tends not to make existing media obsolete, or even dated, necessarily, but instead increase total participation in a given field" (Mellins, 2000, p. 5). Thus, it is still unclear how traditional media will fare in light of the Internet.

Newspapers are not alone in their process of transformation. Museums also face a number of potential influences from the Internet in terms of both how museum collections are accessed and how museums promote themselves. Indeed, the ability of the Internet to provide intimate, multi-media presentations of distant objects calls into question the very basis of the museum as it has traditionally existed. The impact of the Internet on museums, and, in particular, on art museums, is a multifaceted question. This research explores, through the case study method, how the Web is being used by a functioning museum. The primary issue to be addressed is: What is the current status of the Web as a public relations tool for art museums? Since the value of a case study depends on the extent to which it is able to place practice into an overall context, this study will attempt to answer this question by examining the following related questions:

- Are there theoretical models of Web use from a public relations standpoint?
- Can traditional public relations models be applied to the Web?
- Are there behavioral models of the integration of the Web into an organization?
- Are there existing models of actual Web site design for museums?

To answer these questions, the research focuses on the use of the Web by the public relations department of a specific art museum. The subject museum chosen for the focus of this study has existed for nearly 100 years and is ranked in the top 25 percent of museums nationally. With nearly 40,000 works of art valued at more than 200 million dollars in the collection, the subject museum is an accredited member of the American Association of Museums (http://www.aam-us.org). The subject museum is located in a major metropolitan city with a surrounding population of more than one million.

This research is significant because museums are fundamental institutions both culturally and educationally, and the Web has the potential to become one of their most powerful tools by making museum collections available to everyone. Further, this research fills a void in the current body of knowledge by examining the issues presented from the perspective of the public relations practitioner within the museum setting. Additionally, the research focuses on the actual circumstances of a particular museum, thus linking theory to practice.

Literature Review

Public Relations and the World Wide Web

In recent years, much has been written on the Internet as a mass medium—in particular the use of the World Wide Web as a public relations tool. A recent qualitative study conducted by Hill and White examined public relations practitioners' perception of the Web as a communication medium and how the Web fits into the overall communication strategy (2000). The researchers used in-depth interviews to question 13 public relations practitioners whose organizations had established Web sites. After all data was coded using inductive analysis, the researchers found that three dominant themes emerged. The first was that among those practitioners interviewed, the Web site was a low priority task for both the practitioners and the organizations that employed them. Hill and White refer to this as "the Web as a 'B list' task" (2000, p. 38). The second predominant theme was that the Web had "anticipated value." Although the benefits of the site might not be overly obvious in the present, practitioners anticipated future benefits; thus, their reasoning for the existence of the sites. The final emerging theme was that of a "juggling act," which identified issues that influenced the public relations practitioners' managing of the Web site as a public relations tool (Hill and White, 2000, p. 38).

Regardless of these issues, the study concluded that practitioners perceive a Web site as a useful communication tool. According to the researchers, "Participants believed that a Web site had the potential to provide information to the media, to demonstrate the organization's competitiveness, and to build relationships with new and existing publics" (Hill and White, 2000, p. 46). Participants also believed in the "symbolic" value of a Web site, "... having a Web site creates a positive image and competitive edge for an organization and allows the organization to appear to be on the cutting edge" (Hill and White, 2000, p. 46). Despite these perceived benefits, none of the participants could demonstrate with research that these benefits were being achieved.

Although much has been written about the Web as a public relations tool, few research articles have used any sort of theoretical framework with which to address the issue of Webbed communication (Johnson, 1997). However, a 1998 article by Kent and Taylor provided a "theory-based, strategic framework to facilitate relationship building with publics through the World Wide Web" (1998, p. 321). The theoretical framework on which they based their perspectives was that of "dialogic communication." This theory is most often associated with Martin Buber, who believed that dialogue was the basis for communicative relations built on openness and respect (Kent and Taylor, 1998). In Kent and Taylor's work, dialogic communication refers to "any negotiated exchange of ideas and opinions" (Kent and Taylor, 1998, p. 325). In this sense, dialogic communication implies that parties communicate with each other as the goal of the relationship, rather than as a means to an end.

Based on the philosophical principles of dialogic communication, Kent and Taylor ask, "If relationship building is the foundation of public relations, how can the technology of the Web affect communicative relationships?" (1998, p. 324). They conclude that it is not the technology itself that creates or destroys relationships, but rather how that technology is used as a communication tool. A recent article in *PR Week* also addressed the capability of the Web as a communication medium. The article quoted Mike Spataro, EVP in charge of Web communications at Weber Shandwick Interactive, citing the power of the medium as a dialogic communication tool. Spataro said, "The real promise of the medium is to be able to establish two-way relationships, through e-mail campaigns, community dialogues and chat (At the Crossroads, 2001, p. 27). The body of the research of Kent and Taylor elaborates on five principles for embracing the dialogic capability of the Web.

Kent and Taylor state that a "feedback" loop—a system that allows the public to question the organization and then allows the organization to provide answers—is the proper place to begin dialogic communication (1998). The Web can be the ideal medium to provide this tool; however, it is not simply enough to have an Internet presence. Someone specifically trained in public relations must be available to respond to questions, concerns, and information requests. Two of the issues Kent and Taylor address relate to content. It is the content itself that should be the driving force of the Web site, not the "smoke and mirrors" (Kent and Taylor, 1998, 328). Content should also be updated on a regular basis to give people a reason to return to the site. Further, sites should be easy to navigate and understand. For dialogic communication to succeed, sites must allow for updates and shared information. Examples include on-line question and answer sessions, group discussions, on-line "experts," and changing issues. The final principle Kent and Taylor suggest is that of "conservation of visitors." The authors suggest that links be provided only for the purpose of "information" and not for "entertainment." Further, in light of Buber's philosophy, advertisements on Web sites should be placed as not to hinder the visitor's experience.

As mentioned previously, the Web can be considered the first controlled mass medium of public relations. Given this power of the Web, it would seem that organizations would use proven means to develop the messages within their Web sites. The link between research, planning, and evaluation in achieving effective public relations has been well-documented (Dozier, 1992). A 1999 study by White and Raman examined the use of the Web as a public relations medium and the use of research, planning, and evaluation in the development process. The study used in-depth interviews to question a sample of twenty-two companies where the unit of analysis was the "Web site decision-maker." This person "... was defined as a manager who has responsibility for planning the content and format of the Web site" (White and Raman, 1999, p. 408). The people in the role of Web site decision-maker had a variety of formal titles; however, no one in the sample had the term "public relations" in his or her title (White and Raman, 1999).

Through inductive analysis, White and Raman found that in the majority of cases, it was the decision of the CEO or marketing manager to develop a Web site. This decision was most often made because of the common belief that the Internet is the medium of the future; and if it is not embraced, one's organization will be left behind. A significant finding of the study was that none of the Web site decision-makers conducted formal research before launching their organization's site. White and Raman observed, "Decisions were usually made based on the Web site decision-maker's personal preference, copying what he or she liked about other sites..." (1999, p. 410). The data used for this finding cited terms such as "gut feeling," "common sense," and "seat of my pants" (White and Raman, 1999, p. 410).

In regard to site evaluation, only three of the organizations conducted any sort of formal research. One organization used an online survey, while two other organizations collected data about the site from business-wide surveys. Several of the Web site decision-makers conducted less formal research, such as tracking Web site "hits," examining E-mail feedback, and examining the competitor's sites. The key finding is that most Web site decision-makers admitted that they did not actually know if they were reaching their target audience or if their sites were effective (White and Raman, 1999). All twenty-two Web site decision-makers gave evidence of the need to stay competitive with their Web sites. One respondent replied, "We wanted to have one [a Web site] because everyone else had one. Our competition started getting on the Web and we had to follow" (White and Raman, 1999, p. 413). Although many respondents doubted that their organization's Web sites were generating a profit, they still stated that Internet technology was the best bet for future markets. Also related, respondents noted the need to simply have an "Internet presence" (White and Raman, 1999).

Even those respondents who stated that Web sites were not necessarily effective, were committed to maintaining a site. Overall, "The study found evidence that organizations perceive an urgency in creating Web sites that supercedes the rational planning process that is often used for traditional communication vehicles" (White and Raman, 1999, p. 416). In the haste to establish an Internet presence, many Web site decision-makers were ignoring the basic postulates of public relations research, planning, and evaluation (White and Raman, 1999). White and Raman conclude that although the Internet is a new medium that is expanding rapidly, it is a form of communication with audiences and the rational decision-making process should not be ignored.

Museums and the Internet

A 1998 dissertation titled "Museums, Galleries, Art Sites, Virtual Curating, and the World Wide Web" by Markus Kruse explored how museums, art galleries and artists have approached the new medium and the issues of the virtual museum and its relationship to the traditional museum. The premise for Kruse's study is that "the majority of museums and art galleries have been somewhat hesitant in accepting this new form of electronic information facilitation and publishing of the visual arts via the WWW" (1998, p. 4).

In regard to virtual curating, the Web has tremendous potential. There are certain technical considerations that must be considered; however, these technical considerations are no excuse for poor curatorial work on museum Web sites. Kruse states, "One can find instances of sloppy curatorial work over the Internet because many sites portray a misunderstanding of the WWW and its possibilities as a communication medium" (1998, p. 8). Although Kruse's work is focused on visual and artistic considerations of museum Web sites, his statement clearly shows that the misunderstanding of the Web as a communication medium extends beyond that of the public relations practitioner as described in previous sections of this literature review.

As part of Kruse's research, he evaluated the Web sites of several well-known museums. He found that the Web site of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, as well as the sites of most museums, was "highly text oriented" (1998, p. 50). Kruse found that the overall emphasis of the site seemed to be on "… selling gifts from the museum shop rather than the presentation of the permanent collection, present, or past exhibitions" (1998, p. 55). The site contained only one or two "thumbnail" images for each current exhibit. And, although most sites highlight a few "teaser" pieces from the collection, most museums have not made their entire collections available on the Web for entertainment, research, or education (Kruse, 1998). Further, Kruse found that "… most of the designers of these pages have little curatorial or design experience" (1998, p. 51). For example, the Dallas Museum of Art's Web site contained a few pieces from the permanent collection, but the pieces are only identified by artist, title, and sometimes medium. The date and size—size in particular, being a crucial aspect for online viewing—of the pieces are not included in the Web collection. Kruse says, "By just placing the images of an exhibition on the WWW without necessary background information the museum does not necessarily provide a useful service" (1998, p. 9). This also reflects previously reviewed public relations literature about the Web citing the belief that simply having an Internet presence is enough.

For his dissertation research, Kruse also conducted a brief Web-based survey. Kruse questioned the respondents on their interpretation of a visit to a museum, gallery, or individual artist's Web site. Based on Kruse's findings, he concludes that it is not surprising that so many people perceive art on the Web similar to art in books or magazines; "Publishing on the WWW today is one sided and mimics the printed media" (1998, p. 138). The data analyzed on age and level of education also prompted Kruse to conclude that demographic factors do help determine how visitors perceive Web sites. Based on this finding, Kruse states, "It is of utmost importance that the creators know their target audience" (1998, p. 139).

The goal of the literature review was also to build a framework that addressed the theoretical perspectives as stated in the introduction of this thesis. As such, the literature reviewed in this section provided the basis for the premise of this research. Recent research has addressed the use of the Web as a public relations tool, but not specifically in the museum setting. Additional research has examined Web use by museums, but did not relate it to the public relations field. Consequently, this research will incorporate these elements in order to provide a detailed case study of the use of the Web as a public relations tool for art museums.

Methodology

Given the objective of this project, the research was conducted primarily through the intensive case study method. Since a case study uses multiple sources of data to investigate a problem, the body of this research consisted of three interrelated elements: interviews with key employees of the subject museum, an analysis of the subject museum's existing Web site, and a visitor survey of the subject museum. Throughout the remainder of this research paper, any reference to the museum indicates the subject museum of the study unless otherwise indicated.[1]

As in the research of Hill and White and White and Raman, in-depth interviews were used to question respondents. Although predetermined questions were used, respondents were allowed to elaborate as much as they wanted; and the interviewer could choose to include additional questions at the time of the interview, if the need arose. Those museum employees interviewed—listed by position—were the public relations director, the assistant to the public relations director, the Webmaster, the education director, and a museum curator.[2]

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[1] For the purposes of this case study, the researcher chose to keep the name of the museum blind because of concerns about public perception of the museum and its employees as a result of the study's findings and conclusions. By not identifying the museum and avoiding the use of employee's names in the written paper, the researcher was able to avoid a potential review by the museum board that may have resulted in pressure to edit or bias the data and its subsequent analysis. The researcher has taken precautions to document sources on tape

The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed for analysis purposes. At the time of the interview, the researcher explained the project in more detail and answered any questions. The researcher also explained that the interviews would be tape recorded for analysis purposes. Interviewees were further told that they had the right to refuse to answer any question that they were not comfortable answering. All interviewees verbally agreed to participate in the study and agreed to the tape-recorded session. Once the information was collected, the data was analyzed using an inductive strategy.

A significant piece of this research for this project was an analysis of the museum's current Web site. The premise for the evaluation was to provide an additional source of data with which to understand the use of the Web as a public relations tool at the museum. Primarily, this analysis was descriptive in terms of what a Web site visitor would experience during a visit to the museum's Web site. As mentioned in the Literature Review, Kruse's dissertation research also included evaluations of the Web sites of several well-known museums; however, Kruse did not employ a specific methodology for his Web site evaluations. As such, the goal of the Web site analysis was to determine if the museum's Web site achieved dialogic communication by complying with the principles Kent and Taylor address.

The research for this case study also included a brief, one-day survey of the museum's visitors. Since a nonprobability convenience sample was used, the results cannot be generalized to the population as a whole; however the results can be used to establish a "snapshot" of visitors to the museum and their use of the Web. The idea behind conducting a descriptive survey was to

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and to secure this information. This is in no way intended to be a criticism of the museum or its leadership, but an intentional part of the methodology in order to obtain greater access to unfiltered information.

[2] In an effort to ensure the reliability and validity of these responses, interviews with employees outside of the public relations department were conducted.

determine if respondents visited the museum's Web site prior to their physical museum visit. If they did visit the site, the survey asked whether or not it encouraged them to visit the physical museum. Along with demographic information, the survey also collected data on respondents' use of the Web and their visual arts knowledge. A copy of the survey can be found in *Appendix 1*.

In addition to providing answers to the actual practices of the museum as related to the Web site, the three elements of the research project also addressed the theoretical perspectives as established in the literature review. The in-depth interviews and Web site analysis determined if the museum followed the theoretical model for the development of a Web site based on dialogic communication as outlined by Kent and Taylor. Both the use of the Web at the museum in relation to traditional public relations models and the behavioral models of the integration of the Web at the museum were established from the in-depth interviews. Additionally, the actual Web site design of the museum was critiqued as compared to the dialogic model and the results of Kruse's analysis of existing museum Web sites.

Although not directly related to the theoretical perspectives, the museum visitor survey was an integral part of this research project as it helped begin to formulate a picture of those visitors to the museum and their use of the Web. Further, Sanders suggested that "... a combination of qualitative and quantitative research provides for stronger analyses than would have been possible by collecting either type alone, especially in the study of organizations" (as cited in Grunig, 1996, p. 463).

Results

Development of the Web Site

The public relations director stated that the primary responsibility of the department is to bring awareness about the museum to the public (personal communication, May 2, 2001).[3]

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[3] The public relations department does not have written public relations plan. Although all of the development division members interviewed stated that a plan was followed and that there were certain activities that occurred,

Although the public relations department employs traditional means of promotion such as story placements, letters to the editor, press preview parties, and radio and television appearances, the department is also responsible for paid advertising. According to the public relations director, "anything that the public sees or hears falls under the responsibility of the public relations department" (personal communication, May 2, 2001).

The public relations department operations are based on two primary audiences: local residents and visitors. It is crucial to the public relations director that local residents acknowledge that the museum is "their museum;" however, the home city of the museum has such a large tourist population that this audiences' needs must also be considered (personal communication, May 2, 2001). Further, because there is so much to see and do in the surrounding area, the public relations director believes that the museum must capture a tourist's attention before they ever arrive in the city. The public relations director said, "You get a visitor before they come or you don't get them. You need to get them when they are at home—when they are planning their trip" (personal communication, May 2, 2001).

Based on this belief, the World Wide Web becomes an obvious medium with which to capture a visitor's attention. The Web allows the museum to spread its message to a mass audience without the interference of a gatekeeper. The public relations director shares this sentiment; "The Web is a wonderful way to capture our visitors. More and more people are looking ahead" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). Regarding the Web in such a positive light, however, is relatively new to the museum.

Discussions about developing a Web site for the museum first began in the early part of 1997. Although the World Wide Web was already well established by this point, the museum, like

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there was no available written documentation available. All information presented in this section was gathered through interviews and observations.

most other museums was just beginning its Web site development.[4] According to the public relations director, at that time, the museum administration did not recognize the value in using the Web to promote the museum (personal communication, May 2, 2001). The public relations team also thought that developing a Web site would be a waste of resources, in particular time and money. Reflecting on those feelings the public relations director said, "It was a naïve look at new cutting edge technology [the Web], but it wasn't even cutting edge four years ago. Four years ago we should have been more aware, but we weren't" (personal communication, May 2, 2001).

The administration finally agreed to develop a site, based in part, on the fact that other museums were beginning to have an Internet presence and that the Internet was the new trend. The public relations director said, "Other museums played a huge part in the decision to develop a site" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). The decision was also made because the museum administration felt that a Web site would help bring awareness about the museum to the public and it would help to advance the educational mission of the museum.

During initial development of the site, museum decision-makers were extremely hesitant to put images from the museum's collection on the site. According to the public relations director, the rationale for this position was that if people could see the images on the site, then they would have no reason to physically visit the museum (personal communication, May 2, 2001). Despite this concern, the public relations team, as well as museum curators, thought that the museum's Web site must contain images from the collections and that these images would be no substitute for actually viewing the originals in the physical museum. The curator interviewed for the project stated, "I think that concern is there, but I am very comfortable, as are most museum people, thinking that the digital reproduction on an Internet site is an effective bait more so than being a final experience" (personal communication, May 16, 2001). The curator added, "From a curator standpoint, I think the Internet has completely changed our lives and our goals and the greater public's access to imagery. If I had my way, every single photograph in our collection would be available online" (personal communication, May 16, 2001).

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[4] By 1995 the Web was well established with more than 4 million individual Web pages, but only 220 pages officially belonged to art museums (Kruse, 1998). Although the Internet presence of museums had jumped to more than 700 pages in 1996 and more than 900 pages in 1997, museums still appeared hesitant in accepting the new medium (Kruse, 1998).

An outside contractor developed the original site for the museum, and the site was launched in the early part of 1997. The public relations department was responsible for maintenance and updates to the new Web site. This responsibility fell to the senior development associate for grants. Despite this specific title, this individual does a wide variety of work for the museum. For the purposes of this project, this individual will be referred to as the Webmaster. The Webmaster said that although not originally hired to be the Webmaster, he agreed to take on the additional responsibilities associated with maintaining the site because he believed it was crucial for the museum to have a Web presence (personal communication, May 16, 2001).

The assistant to the public relations director is also responsible for working with the Web site. In the interview, the assistant said, "Although the site is important, it tends to get pushed to the side" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). The reason that this often occurs is because time sensitive tasks demand immediate attention, while the Web site maintenance and updates can be postponed indefinitely. This sentiment echoes the findings uncovered by Hill and White in their study of public relations practitioners' perception of the use of the Web as a communication medium. Although the museum public relations department believed that a Web site would be a benefit to the organization, the site became a low priority task. Further, comments by both the Webmaster and the assistant to the public relations director implied that, managing the Web site has become a "juggling act" (Hill and White, 2000). They are both enthusiastic about working on the site and understand its potential benefits, but noted that there simply are not enough hours to give the Web site the attention it deserves.

As the Web site stands today, the assistant to the public relations director stated that she doesn't often refer people to the Web site for information. According to the public relations team, the site is not updated on a regular basis (personal communication, May 2, 2001). Further, some of those interviewed at the museum also think that the navigation is confusing and that it could be more user-friendly (personal communication, May 2, 2001). The assistant to the public relations director summarized the current state of the Web site at the museum as follows:

> "It needs to become more of a priority. Obviously, the Web is incredibly important. It's probably, I would think, the thing that most people see of the museum before they come here. If I was going to come to the museum, I would check out the Web site first. It is people's first image of the museum. So if it's their first image, we want it to be great otherwise they are not going to come. If I had more confidence in it I would definitely tell people to check out our Web site, but I don't say that now because I am scared to go on the Web site and see that such and such is on there from months ago" (personal communication, May 2, 2001).

In early 2000, an outside contractor began to host the museum's Web site, which allowed for unlimited storage capacity and additional technical support. This technical support included the capability to sell items through the museum's Web site—the ability to bring additional revenue to the museum. According to the public relations director, "the pivotal point was when we started selling memberships and catalogues on the Web site, and we got response. Then administration thought this [the Web site] was a good idea" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). Further, the public relations director added that by this point in time, Web sites were popping up everywhere. The public relations director said, "perception changed because there was more and more awareness about the Internet" (personal communication, May 2, 2001).

Current Web Site Developments at the Museum

The public relations director believes that today the Web site is a huge priority for the museum. As such, the museum's Web site is once again undergoing revisions. The Webmaster said that the redesign is being guided by two major principles (personal communication, May 16, 2001). The first is to develop a simpler, more streamlined site with a focus on ease of use and increased availability of information. The second principle focuses on increasing the revenue producing capability of the Web site. The new site will allow the museum to market additional items from the museum gift shop. According to the Webmaster, the ability to market items over the Web "laid the groundwork that convinced the administration that we could use the Web for revenue" (personal communication, May 16, 2001).

The public relations director also believes that the museum needs to keep up with other museums in terms of Web technology. The public relations director said,

> "Other museums have been doing this for a long time. They know how to reach their audience and they're doing it in a snazzy way. Museums are visuals. If you're selling books, you can put text on there and it works fine. But if you're selling visuals, you need to sell image. Our site does this now, but it needs to do it better. It needs to showcase the museum as a whole" (personal communication, May 2, 2001).

Although the development division is leading the new Web site redesign, others at the museum have had the opportunity to provide their input. Upon initial development discussions, all of the curators were asked to meet with the new Web designer to provide their input. The curator said, "The curators have been shown initial mock-ups of the Web site and are now being asked what sort of content we might want on the site. We are being asked to help design the 'information architecture' of the site" (personal communication, May 16, 2001). The primary issue that was raised during curator meetings with the Web developer was the quality of the images that would be on the new site. Initially, the images on the site were of a low quality and low resolution due to fears of reproduction. This view has since changed and the curators are in agreement that the images of the works of art displayed on the Web should be of a high quality and accurately labeled with curatorial information (personal communication, May 16, 2001).

The director for education at the museum is a strong proponent of the Web site and believes that the site is a valuable tool to help advance the educational mission of the museum.

The director for education said, "We want to expand education's role in the Web site. We don't have any of our education materials online. I would like to see us make these available physically and virtually" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). The idea is to provide educational materials online, so that teachers would be able to access them directly from their classrooms. According to the director for education, "The site is helping the museum. It's there. We're on. People can get to us. It is being used, but it's certainly not being used to its potential" (personal communication, May 2, 2001).

The director for education stated that the museum is missing an opportunity in regard to the Web site (personal communication, May 2, 2001). She further explained this view by saying, "You only live in one area. Imagine that the whole globe can come to your doors electronically, if not physically" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). The director for education has, however, encountered some dissenting views about this position. She said, "People in the museum know that I am a strong proponent of virtual reality, but the argument from the some is 'why do you want to put it on the Web when we need them to walk in the door?' The answer is, in my opinion, what about those people who can't come through the door?" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). In the her view, traditional museum audiences are changing and although it is still important to have people physically come through the doors of the museum, it is also vital to make resources available to those people who cannot (personal communication, May 2, 2001).

The director for education also stated that it is necessary for the departments within the museum to work together on the Web site. She said, "There is currently no clearly developed process for putting information on the site. So far, all information that is put on the Web site comes from the development division" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). The director for education did, however, acknowledge that the development division knows that others need to be involved in Web site decision-making process, but the process is not yet in place for this transfer of information to occur (personal communication, May 2, 2001). She said, "Public relations and education relate to each other. There isn't anything for public relations to promote on the Web site if the basic activities aren't updated" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). She further added, "The role of education is as a visitor advocate. You must think about how you would feel if you were a visitor coming to the front door" (personal communication, May 2, 2001). The same is true for visitors to the museum Web site. According to the director for education,

> "It's fine if the administration wants to sell museum gifts on the site, but that's hardly a vision and a mission for the site. We are not integrating the site into the mission of the exhibition. Every education program is contingent on exhibitions. We have full curatorial scholarship exhibits. Why isn't the Web site an integral part of that? We need to focus" (personal communication, May 2, 2001).

In examining the museum's Web site, it is crucial to examine the role of technology as a whole at the museum. According to interviews, historically, the museum has tended to resist new technology. The public relations department at the museum also acknowledges that the museum is behind in terms of technology. The public relations director stated, "We are so far behind that we have a long, long way to get up." (personal communication, May 2, 2001).The analysis of the use of the Web as a public relations tool for art museums will now address the actual Web site of the museum.[5]

Web Site Analysis

The evaluation of the museum's Web site was based on the theoretical perspective of dialogic communication as described by Kent and Taylor. As applied to public relations, dialogic communication "seeks to create lasting, genuine, and valuable relations with its publics, and it should not operate merely as a propaganda, marketing, or advertising tool" (Kent and Taylor, 1998, p. 330). For the purposes of providing an analysis of the museum's Web site, the five principles Kent and Taylor recommend were grouped into three primary categories. These categories are communication, content, and navigation.

Although the museum's site does not allow for high-level communication, such as on-line question and answer sessions, the site provides e-mail addresses and additional contact information. The education director and the public relations personnel interviewed all stated that they frequently receive e-mails from the public and from the media, thus launching the beginning of a "feedback loop," as advocated by Kent and Taylor.

The museum's Web site is also content driven; however, several specifics must be addressed. As the museum has two stated audiences—local residents and tourists—it would follow that the museum's Web site might contain a specific section for each of these particular audiences. This was not the case. As a whole, however, the museum's existing Web site provides for the most basic information for which the two stated publics might be looking, such as location and operating hours. The site also provides basic information about the current and upcoming exhibitions, although these listings are not consistent throughout the site. On a positive note, the contact information of the museum employees is listed numerous times in order for the public to obtain additional information that is not contained within the Web site.

The current site, however, fails to provide adequate information to those publics looking for more detailed information. For example, the education section of the Web site provides basic information about children's programs, but does not list the available classes or the dates and times of those classes, a service that could be quite valuable to local residents. From the tourists' perspective, the site contains no information about accommodations near the museum or information about transportation. Although it is not a stated public for the museum, the current site also fails to provide information for the media; and, while there is a press releases section of the Web site, the current releases on the site are outdated.

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[5] Since this Web site evaluation was conducted, the museum has significantly updated and modified the existing Web site design. As such, this evaluation is not longer an accurate picture of the museum's Web site.

The museum's Web site does not adequately provide higher-level information. The "collections" page of the site exemplifies this. This page is a primary link that is available on every page of the Web site, and given the title of the page, the Web site visitor would be likely to assume that information about the museum's collection is provided. This page includes 16 thumbnails with poorly labeled curatorial information and no written text about the museum's collections. And, although, the Web site contains a series of well-developed and information-rich pages on specific works of art, this section is hidden within the Web site and there is no clear-cut way for a Web site visitor to locate the section.

The conclusion must be made that although valuable information is contained within the site, it could easily be missed due to confusing navigational components. Further, based on the researcher's evaluation, the museum's Web site did not appear to contain links to any other Web sites, nor did it contain any advertising. This may be taking Kent and Taylor's "conservation of visitors" principle too far, since a central feature of the Web—perhaps the central feature—is its ability to link relevant pages and sites.

Museum Visitor Survey

On the day the survey was conducted, the museum had 245 visitors. Of those 245 visitors, interviewers were able to solicit 115 respondents for the survey. This accounts for nearly 47 percent of visitors for the day.[6] Of the respondents, 21 had previously visited the museum's Web site. This accounts for a little more than 18 percent of the respondents questioned. Of those respondents, ten people stated that the visit to the Web site had encouraged them to physically visit the museum, while ten people said that their visit to the Web site had no effect on their decision to physically visit the museum. Only one respondent replied that the visit to the Web site discouraged them from visiting the museum.

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[6] It is important to note that the museum includes children, toddlers, and infants in their official "head count" for the day. Since this survey only focused on those 18 and older, a large number of visitors were automatically disqualified. Further, other visitors could not be questioned because they may have passed by one of the interview stations while the interviewer was questioning another respondent.

Those who had visited the museum's Web site were also questioned about their perceptions of art on the Web. Only one respondent interpreted the Web site visit like an actual visit to the museum. Ten respondents interpreted the Web site visit like a preview before visiting the museum, while eight respondents interpreted it like looking at a magazine or a book. When questioned about how they perceive a work of art on the Web, 17 respondents noted that it was like looking at a magazine or a book, while two respondents stated that it was like watching television. Interestingly, no respondents said that it was like virtual reality or like viewing an actual art object. These findings are similar to those of Kruse through which he concludes that many Web site visitors interpret art on the Web like looking at it in a book or a magazine because "publishing on the Web today is one sided and mimics the printed media" (Kruse, 1998, p. 138).

The data analysis also examined characteristics of those visitors who had not visited the museum's Web site prior to their physical visit to the museum. Ninety percent of the respondents were Web users, with more than 65 percent being experienced Web users. In this study, experienced Web users are defined as those who have been using the Web for more than five years. Of this group, nearly 50 percent spend more than five hours a week using the Web.

Nearly 75 percent of respondents use the Web primarily for entertainment and research/education. Of the 103 respondents who were Web users, 31use the Web primarily for entertainment and 46 use the Web primarily for research/education. When examining the museum's Web site from the public relations perspective, it is especially encouraging to find that the majority of the museum visitors are using the Web for entertainment and research/education. Museums, by definition, are institutions that have a goal of providing entertainment and education for their various audiences. These are two areas that the museum Web developers should, and can, embrace when addressing Web site considerations.

Discussion

As Marshall McLuhan noted, it is not so much the message contained within the medium, as it is the nature of the medium itself that affects society. If this view is accepted, there is little doubt that the Internet will bring about major changes in communication. Institutions that have relied on traditional forms of communication have had to begin to rethink their mission in an effort to ensure their continued place within our future. The museum is a prime example.

The study addressed the question: What is the current status of the Web as a public relations tool for art museums? This study attempted to determine the relevance of the following theoretical perspectives: theoretical models of Web use from a public relations standpoint; the Web in relation to traditional public relations models; behavioral models of the integration of the Web into an organization; and models of actual Web site design.

From the in-depth interviews, it is evident that the role of Web technology at the museum has passed through several key phases. Initially, the need for a Web site was not recognized throughout the organization. The belief that visitors would not physically visit the museum if they could view the images on the Web site was widespread among museum decision-makers; the museum viewed the Web as competition.

As the museum is a visual institution, one would expect to find a rigor for visuals extended to the museum's Web site. The majority of pages within the museum's Web site, however, do not present images of works of art. Granted, some pages are purely textual in nature, such as the contact list of the museum employees; however, as a visual institution it follows that the institution would want to capitalize, to the greatest extent possible, the power of the Web as a visual medium. Further, in the majority of cases in which images of works of art are included on the site, basic curatorial information is either non-existent or poorly constructed.

This is a key finding in terms of a theoretical understanding of the Web. Is seeing art on the Web the same as seeing it in an actual museum? As this study showed, artistic considerations such as this will continue to be a source of debate. From the consumption point of view, the museum visitor survey revealed that the majority of the museum's Web site visitors did not perceive their visit to the museum's Web site like an actual visit to the museum. Further, the majority of respondents stated that viewing an art object on the Web was like looking at a magazine or a book or like watching television. No respondents said that it was like viewing an actual art object. These findings are similar to those of Kruse. He concludes that so many Web site visitors interpret art on the Web like looking at it in a book or a magazine because "publishing on the Web today is one sided and mimics the printed media" (Kruse, 1998, p. 138).

Regardless of artistic concerns within the museum, the museum eventually realized that it could not continue to ignore the Web. As more and more museums developed Web sites, the fear within the museum subsided. An initial site was developed, and the public relations team was given responsibility for its maintenance.

At this point in the Web's history, there are not abundant theoretical models for the development of Web sites from the public relations perspective. As such, it is important to consider traditional public relations models as they might apply to Web site development. The four steps of effective public relations have been well documented and their success has been amply proven (Cutlip et al, 2000). As noted in the literature review, the White and Raman study examined the use of the Web as a public relations medium and the use of research, planning, and evaluation in the development process (1999).

The findings of White and Raman are applicable to the situation at the museum. During the planning process for the museum's Web site, little or no formal research was conducted. Several interviewees mentioned that other museum sites were examined, but no formal review was conducted. Also, no research in regard to audience needs was conducted, nor was formal evaluation conducted after the Web site was launched. The Web site developers at the museum do not know whether their messages are reaching the intended audience through the Web site. The evaluation of the museum's Web site supported this finding. From this perspective, it is crucial to examine theoretical models for effective use of the Web as a public relations medium.

Kent and Taylor developed a theoretical framework that of "dialogic communication" on which they based their perspectives. In regard to this theoretical framework, the museum's Web site capitalizes on several of the principles that Kent and Taylor recommend. The museum's Web site allows for basic communication resources, but it does not allow for advanced communication capability as necessary for dialogic communication. The site is content-driven; however, the content is not updated on a regular basis and the site contains outdated information in several key places, such as coming events and press releases. Further, the site contains no links to related information of any kind. In regard to navigation, the site could be more user-friendly. There are information-rich pages within the site, but they are not easy to locate; and as such, a visitor may be likely to overlook key areas of the site.

Moving from theory to practical considerations, this research project attempted to analyze the situation at the museum as based on behavioral models of the integration of the Web into an organization. Several previous research studies have also done this from the public relations perspective. Similar to the findings of the Hill and White study, museum employees believed that the Web site was necessary because everyone else was developing Web sites. Also found in Hill and White's study, the museum employees believed that the site had anticipated value. This is evident by the discovery that the Web site received a higher priority status when the museum's administration realized that the site could be used to bring revenues to the museum through online sales of membership, books, and t-shirts.

While the Hill and White study specifically examined public relations practitioners' perception of Web sites, the White and Raman study found that no Web site decision-makers in the sample had the term "public relations" in his or her title (White and Raman, 1999). The decision to assign the Web site to the public relations department at the museum can be viewed as a success for the organization. Interviews further revealed that the majority of the museum employees now recognize that the Web is a powerful medium that should be embraced, from both the verbal and visual points of view. Although the site is now a stated priority of the museum, ample resources in terms of time and money have not been dedicated to the site. The site continues to receive low priority status. Hill and White refer to this as "the Web as a 'B list' task" and its maintenance as a "juggling act" (Hill and White, 2000). However, the museum employees recognize that their organization has not used the medium to its fullest extent, and the museum is now is the process of developing a more refined site.

Little theory has been developed in regard to specifics of Web site design for museums. Although it contained little theoretical foundation, Kruse's research explored how museums have approached the new medium. The findings of the subject museum's Web site analysis are similar to those that Kruse uncovered in his analysis of the Web sites of several prominent museums. As with the museum, the majority of sites Kruse examined contained only one or two "thumbnail" images for each current exhibit. Further, the analysis of the museum's Web site revealed that little regard was given for curatorial issues, another situation also observed by Kruse. This is an especially critical issue for viewing images of works of art online. Those who are involved with museum Web site design, particularly those involved with providing information to the public, must recognize how museum collections are organized and labeled on museum Web sites.

The purpose of the museum visitor survey was to begin to answer some of the questions regarding the use of the museum's Web site by the public. Since the survey was conducted at the museum and a convenience sample was used, the results are not applicable to the public as a whole. However, the survey revealed results that can begin to form a composite picture of both those visitors to the physical museum and those visitors to the museum Web site. Although the survey found that only a little more than 18 percent of respondents had visited the museum's Web site, the majority of respondents—nearly 90 percent—were Web users. Further, the survey revealed that the primary use of the Web by respondents was for entertainment and research/education, two areas in which the physical museum already excels and which can be easily extended and adapted into the cyber world.

This case study was conducted in an attempt to link theory and practice in a rapidly evolving medium. As with most case studies, more questions are uncovered than are answered. This study is no exception. For those working in the museum public relations field, it is evident that the Web can be a useful tool for spreading the museum's message to a large audience without the interference of a gatekeeper. However, it is imperative that museums ensure that they are reaching their intended audience with the intended message. In practical terms, this study revealed that the organization under investigation did not use proven means of effective public relations theory to develop the organization's Web site. No formal research was conducted prior to the Web site development, and no formal evaluation has been conducted since its launch.

Although this research study has concluded that the museum's Web site falls short in several areas, it is necessary to acknowledge strengths on the museum's behalf. First, the museum is a non-profit organization. As such, the museum operates on a strict budget; consequentially, the museum has been quite successful in keeping up with technology based on limited funds. Also, the museum is understaffed in the public relations department. Those working in public relations at the museum are required to perform multiple tasks. Additionally, it is important to reiterate that those interviewed at the museum acknowledge that the site is not being used to its full potential. The staff is aware of the site's weaknesses and is in the process of addressing them with site redesign. Further, it is crucial to note that the shortcomings of the museum's Web site do not occur at the individual level. The primary problems associated with the site can be traced to systemic issues, such as lack of resources, poorly developed processes, and prioritization of issues within the organization as a whole.

The findings of this case study indicate that those in the museum public relations field should consider the access opportunities for their museum visitors that are provided by the World Wide Web, particularly in key areas, such as, education and entertainment. Findings also indicate that the organization of museum collections and how this organization is reflected on the Web are two basic philosophical questions that museums need to address. As museums begin to make more and more of their collections available on the Web, they will have to reconsider the ways in which they account for their actual museum visitors (Kruse, 1998). A reasonable goal for museums in the future would be to regard visitors to the museum's Web site equally to visitors to the physical museum. As mentioned earlier, it is not clear how museums will fare in light of the Internet revolution. Although it is inevitable that the Internet will change the traditional role of the museum, it is imperative that museum public relations practitioners use the new medium to make their collections available in ways previously unimaginable.

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Appendix A: Museum Visitor Survey

1. Do you use the World Wide Web? (If no, skip to question 12)
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

2. How many times have you visited the museum's Web site in the past year? (If no, skip to question 9)
   - ☐ Never
   - ☐ Once
   - ☐ 2 to 5 times
   - ☐ Once a month
   - ☐ Once a week
   - ☐ Daily

3. How did your visit to the museum's Web site affect your decision to come to the museum today?
   - ☐ Encouraged me to visit the museum today
   - ☐ Discouraged me from visiting the museum today
   - ☐ No opinion

4. How many times have you visited any museum's Web site within the last 6 months?
   - ☐ Never
   - ☐ 1 to 3 times
   - ☐ 4 to 6 times
   - ☐ 7 or more times

5. How did you interpret/perceive your visit to the museum's Web site?
   - ☐ Like an actual visit to the museum
   - ☐ Like a preview before visiting the museum
   - ☐ Like looking at a magazine or book
   - ☐ None of the above

6. How do you interpret/perceive a work of art on the WWW?
   - ☐ Like viewing an art object
   - ☐ Like watching television
   - ☐ Like looking at a magazine/book
   - ☐ Like virtual reality
   - ☐ None of the above

7. How do you compare viewing art exhibited on the WWW with viewing it at the physical museum?
   - ☐ Viewing artwork on the Web is like viewing it in a museum
   - ☐ Viewing artwork on the Web is not nearly as fulfilling as viewing it in a museum
   - ☐ You cannot compare viewing artwork on the Web with viewing it in a museum
   - ☐ None of the above

8. How did you first hear about the museum's Web site?
   - ☐ Newspaper
   - ☐ Television
   - ☐ Museum publication
   - ☐ Friend/Relative
   - ☐ Linked to it from another site
   - ☐ Other

9. How long have you been using the World Wide Web?
   - ☐ Less than 6 months
   - ☐ Between 6 and 12 months
   - ☐ Between 1 to 2 years
   - ☐ Between 2 to 3 years
   - ☐ More than 3 years

10. How many hours a week do you spend on the World Wide Web?

- ☐ Under 1 hour
- ☐ Between 1 to 5 hours
- ☐ Between 5 to10 hours
- ☐ Between 10 to 20 hours
- ☐ More than 20 hours

11. What is your primary use of the World Wide Web?

- ☐ Entertainment
- ☐ Work
- ☐ Research/Education
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Other

12. How many times have you physically visited any museum within the last 6 months?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ 1 to 3 times
- ☐ 4 to 6 times
- ☐ 7 or more times

Demographic Questions

13. Do you live in the metropolitan area?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If not, where do you live? ________________________________

14. How would you describe your knowledge of the visual arts?

- ☐ Expert knowledge
- ☐ Good knowledge
- ☐ Some knowledge
- ☐ Little knowledge
- ☐ No knowledge

15. What is your age in years?

- ☐ 18 to 19 years
- ☐ 20 to 35 years
- ☐ 36 to 50 years
- ☐ 51 to 65 years
- ☐ 66 and over

16. What is your highest level of education completed?

- ☐ High school
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ College graduate
- ☐ Master's/Doctoral Degree
- ☐ Professional Degree
- ☐ Other

17. Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

18. Race

- ☐ White
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black
- ☐ Other

Running head: A Cross-Cultural View of Conflict in Media Relations: The Conflict Management Typology of Media Relations in Korea and the US

A Cross-Cultural View of Conflict in Media Relations:
The Conflict Management Typology of Media Relations in Korea and in the US

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ABSTRACT

A Cross-Cultural View of Conflict in Media Relations:
The Conflict Management Typology of Media Relations in Korea and in the US

This study provides practical guidelines for American public relations professionals who plan to design and implement media relations practice in Korea and for Korean professionals in the U.S. The first section of this study addresses the conflict components essential to the relationship between PR professionals and journalists. The second section of this study addresses cultural components essential to media relations in Korea and the U.S.. The final section discusses the implications of cultural differences for Korean and American media relations by encapsulating them in conflict management typologies.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to identify the conflict in the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists in different cultures, and then to propose a strategic approach. Public relations professionals often have to deal with conflicts in their interactions with journalists (Shin & Cameron, 2002). However, often they have not been equipped with sufficient rationale and strategies of conflict management. The field of media relations has had much less emphasis on conflict management, although sporadic studies have described the conflictual nature of public relations (Botan, 1992). The field can benefit by incorporating the conflict or conflict management perspective into its domain at the level of theory-building.

Furthermore, this study suggests some practical implications by incorporating the cross-cultural aspects to the conflict management perspective in media relations. Culture is one of the major components of conflict and plays an especially crucial role in alleviating the conflicting relationship between public relations professionals and journalists. Although there is much discussion regarding the conflicting relationship between public relations professionals and journalists, there has been little attention paid to the way in which the professional activities can be associated with cultural difference of public relations and journalism practice.

The relationship between public relations professionals and journalists historically has been discussed as a conflictual relationship regardless of how much conflict occurs. Accordingly, the existence and nature of conflicts between professionals and journalists has long been a topic of interest in the studies of news work. Most previous studies regard the relationship between the two groups as source-reporter relationship and corroborate the existence of conflict between each other in the agenda building process (Fishman, 1980; Gandy, 1982; Gans, 1979; Rosten, 1937; Sigal, 1973).

Public relations professionals serve as one of the most influential sources through their ability to subsidize information for journalists, while fulfilling their strategic objectives in an advocacy role. Journalists depend on information subsidies from professionals, but mistrust the power that public relations plays in the flow of information because they realize that their role as defenders of the public's right to know. The relationship leads to an inevitable conflict, in which public relations professionals try to manage the news and journalists try to manage the sources in different directions for their needs. (Arnoff, 1976; Belz, Talbott, & Stark, 1989; Berkowitz, 1993; Cameron, Sallot, & Curtin, 1997; Cutlip, 1962; Kopenhaver, 1985; Pincus, Rimmer, Rayfield, & Cropp, 1993; Ryan & Martinson, 1984; Turk, 1985; Shoemaker & Reese, 1991). Some scholars have suggested that a certain degree of conflict is necessary in the source-reporter relationship, since the conflict comes from their different roles (Sallot, Steinfatt, & Salwen, 1998; Shin & Cameron, 2001)

On the other hand, research also has proved that public relations in international settings effectively faces the challenges of communicating with multicultural publics, and public relations practice in countries throughout the world reflects cultural variance. Empirical evidence currently is available regarding the nature of public relations activities in different cultures (Beng, 1994; Culbertson, 1996; Davis, 2000; Dimitrova, 1998; Ferguson, 1998; Haug & Koppang, 1997; Hierbert, 1992, 1994; Huang, 2000; Kaur, 1997; Lyra, 1991; Singh, 2000; Singh & Smyth, 2000; Taylor, 2000; VanLeuven & Pratt, 1996; Vercic, Grunig, & Grunig, 1996; Wee, Tan, & Chew, 1996; Zaharna, 1995; Zetlin, 1995).

The evidence is particularly strong in the area of scholarship on media relations practice. Researchers have long recognized that characteristics of the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists reflect the cultural variability among countries and depend on the culture in which it operates. Different from media relations in the Western countries, public relations professionals in Asian countries such as India, Japan and Korea practice implicit, personal and informal forms of communication with journalists because the media tend to mistrust information that is officially publicized by organizations (Botan, 1992; Grunig et. al., 1995; Shin & Cameron, 2001; Shin & Cameron, 2001; Sriramesh, 1992; Sriramesh & Takasaki, 1999; Sriramesh, Kim, & Takasaki, 1999; Winfield, Mizuno, & Beaudoin, 2000).

> Public relations professionals build personal influence with these key individuals by doing favors for them so that they can solicit favors in return when the organizations need help … Even without writing a press release, many public relations professionals are able to pick up the phone

> and place stories in the media by using the influence they wield with a friendly journalist or editor. The professionals of all three cultures reported that they "entertained" key publics by providing them with food or drinks and by giving gifts (Sriramesh, Kim, & Takasaki, 1999, p 285).

The personal influence of public relations professionals on the news work in India, Japan and Korea has revealed that the cultural variance in the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists in Asian countries is different from that in Western countries. The impact of interpersonal relationship on media relations is indicative of the high-context, collectivism, high power distance and low uncertainty avoidance on the cultural dimensions that Hofstede (1980) identified. In addition, human factors have been found to play an important role by associating with the cultural elements in the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists in Asian countries

Particularly, the relationship between two professions in Korea has been shown to be affected by a network of social relations, which reflect that the media system is a product of a social culture. Korean professionals are more accustomed to implicit, indirect, informal, closed, private and personal interactions, influencing the aspect of their working relationship. Korean journalists are likely to gather news information through the press club system, with its restricted and controlled membership. This information source explicitly shows the personal influence and collective cultural difference in media relations practice in Korea. Journalists in Korea perceive the unique press club system involved in personal relations as credible and ethical in news gathering processes, or tend to mistrust information officially publicized by organizations and prefer disclosed, privatized, indirect or informal information with autonomy of their news selection process (Shin & Cameron, 2001; Sriramesh, Kim, & Takasaki, 1999).

Considering the inevitable conflict between the two professions reflected in the scholarly research, a descriptive study provides the best means to understand the cultural variance in the conflictual relationship and benefit both professions eager to unravel the professional conflict in different cultures. A conflict or conflict management model for public relations is developed as a guideline for suggesting strategies for the conflicting relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists. Also, this study examines various cultural frameworks for conceptualizing how the Asian and Western cultures differ. The current research particularly reviews the literature on conflict management and synthesizes it from a cross-cultural point of view.

In this study, public relations professionals and journalists in Korea and the U.S. were surveyed regarding various types of media relations (ranging from telephone contact, fax news releases, interviews, press conferences, background briefings, official proceedings, private meetings and press tours to e-mail news releases, multimedia press kits, organizational homepage, website pressrooms and online discussion group) in terms of usefulness, credibility, influence, ethics and professionalism. The items represent the personal or mediated relationship, which suggest cultural aspects: personal relationship items are related to high-context, collectivism, high power distance and low uncertainty avoidance.

By examining the different types of media relations related to cultural elements, this study aims at explaining how public relations professionals and journalists of different cultural identities tend to approach their conflictual relationship. Finally, the conflict management typology in media relations is developed as a guideline for suggesting various strategies to manage conflicts that arise in the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists in different cultural contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Conflict Perspective of Media Relations

Public relations is often identified as "the management of communication between an organization and its publics" (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p.6). The concept of conflict offers particular promise for the understanding and perhaps even improvement of the public relations work by introducing the nature of difference among individuals, social groups, formal organizations and nations. The conflict management model best describe the public relations behavior when an organization must manage communication demanded by publics such as journalists, consumers, stockholders, activists and employees. This study develops the conflict management theory of public relations, focusing on media relations in particular.

Rubin et al.(1994) defined conflict as any situation in which two or more parties of individuals, groups, organizations or communities perceive a divergence of interests, and essentially, the perceived difference between two parties' values. Conflict may be identified as a competition between two parties for scarce resources, prestige and power (Laue, 1987), or "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources and interference from the other party in achieving goals" (Hocker & Wilmot, 1991, p. 12). Brickman (1974) also defined conflict as a "situation in which parties must divide or share resources so that, to some degree, the more one party gets, the less others can have." Plowman (1995) characterized that two parties in conflict have consequences for each other.

These definitions of conflict in interpersonal communication offer particular promise for the understanding and perhaps even improvement of the source-reporter relationship by introducing the communicative nature of difference (sender versus receiver or gatekeeper), interdependence of parties in roles and needs (source versus reporter), difference of power (information withholding versus news selection) and perceived incompatibility of goals or values (source's advocacy for favorable coverage versus reporter objectivity for credibility) with scarce resource (limited print or air) and consequences for each other (interference from the other party).

Most importantly, the conflict relationship is based on the interdependent roles in the source-reporter relationship. Public relations professionals serve as one of the most influential sources of news through their ability to subsidize information for journalists (Gandy, 1982). Gans (1979) defined sources as "the actors whom journalists observe or interview, including interviewees who appear on the air or who are quoted in articles, … and those who only supply background information or story suggestions" (p. 80). Shoemaker and Reese (1991) similarly described sources as "external suppliers of raw materials, whether speeches, interviews, corporate reports or government hearings," and indicated "sources have a tremendous effect on mass media content because journalists can't conclude in their news what they don't know"(p. 81). In the source-reporter relationship between public relations professionals and journalists, information subsidies can be characterized as routine channels such as news releases, news conferences, preplanned events or official proceedings (Berkowitz,1993). However, all sources of information are not influential to journalists.

Whereas public relations professionals have power as informations subsidies, journalists have power in the news selection process.

Moreover, although public relations serves as one of the sources to subsidize information for journalists, journalists do not tend to admit the power of public relations on their news work. They view public relations and its professionals as inferior in terms of usefulness, influence, credibility, ethics and professionalism. The fundamental conflict in the source-reporter relationship has been confirmed by much scholarly work. (Arnoff, 1976; Belz, Talbott, & Stark, 1989; Berkowitz, 1993; Cameron, Sallot, & Curtin, 1997; Curtin, 1997; Curtin & Rhodenbough, 2001; Cutlip, 1962; Fishman, 1980; Gandy, 1982; Gans, 1979; Kopenhaver, 1985; Pincus, Rimmer, Rayfield, & Cropp, 1993; Rosten, 1937; Ryan & Martinson, 1984; Sallot, Steinfatt, & Salwen, 1998; Shin & Cameron, 2001; Shoemaker & Reese, 1991; Sigal, 1973; Turk, 1986).

A Cross-Cultural View of Media Relations

Based on the conflict perspective of the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists, this study examines media relations with cultural variances, which identify the cultural elements to influence the relationship. There has been little previous research about how the two professions interact in the news work in different cultural contexts (Shin & Cameron, 2001; Sriramesh & Takasaki, 1999; Sriramesh, Kim, & Takasaki, 1999). This study focuses on the media relations involved in routine or regular channels where public relations professionals and journalists traditionally interact as source and reporter in the Korean and American cultures.

From the previous study, media relations in Korea details the features as interpersonal interactions. The interpersonal nature of informal communication through press club system influences the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists in the news work (Shin & Cameron, 2001). The press club systems can provide an account of their extensiveness and embedness, and describe how public relations professionals and journalists use ordinary encounters to manage their role of conflict in the working relationship. This study aims at discovering that informal and unofficial mediation through press club systems is common in the conflictual working relationship in Korea. The mediation factor is mostly interpersonal, privatized, closed, collective and informal setting, which creates a more cooperative atmosphere in the conflicting relationship between public relations professionals and journalists.

On the other hand, the relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists in the U.S. are characterized as mediated interactions by employing the advanced technology as much as possible in their working relationship. Some 88 percent of public relations practitioners admitted that their departments use online services to support public relations objectives (Ryan, 1999), and journalists' use of online news releases grew substantially from 26 percent in 1995 to 72 percent in 2000 (Middleberg & Ross, 2000). The mediated, personalized or individual relationship is involved in a computer and technology-based relationship, where public relations professionals and journalists interact as source and reporter directly by using the Internet and related technologies (Bovet, 1995; Ha & James, 2000; Hill & White, 2000; Garrison, 1995; Garrison, 1997; Garrison, 2000; Holtz, 1999; Marlow, 1996; Noack, 1999; O'Keefe, 1997). Many scholars believe that the absence of nonverbal cues has led to impersonal communication. As communication channels filter out nonverbal cues, there is "less salience of the co presence of other people," and "the absence of nonverbal social context cues" causes users to become depersonalized and interpersonally hostile" (Walther, 1994, p. 475). The relationship factor is mostly mediated, direct, individual communication, which creates a more conflicting atmosphere in the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists.

As cultural elements have unfolded, Korean media relations can be distinguished from the U.S. media relations in several ways. The relationship between public relations professionals and journalists can be associated with such cultural tendencies as high-context or low-context, collectivism or individualism, high or low power distance, high or low uncertainty avoidance. Korean communication differs from American communication in terms of subculture, structure, process and relationship. Its nature is implicit rather than explicit, its structure is based on collectivism rather than individualism, its process is top down instead of bottom up, and it relationship is oriented to long-term relationship instead of short-term relationship. The difference between Korean media relations and the U.S. media relations can be better specified to propose the cultural variance in the conflictual source-reporter relationship as follows:

High-context & Low-context

Hall (1976; 1982) discussed the concept of high context and low context cultures by considering meaning and context as "inextricably bound up with each other." The difference between high and low context cultures depends on how much meaning is found in the context versus in the code. The U.S culture is one of the well know low-context cultures, where meaning is placed more in the language code than in the context; information is vested in the explicit code; and accordingly, communication tends to be explicit, specific and analytical (Ting-Toomey, 1985). On the other hand, Korean culture is a high-context culture, where meaning is embedded more in the context than in the code. Hall (1982) stated, "most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message" (p.12). Explicit communication has traditionally been overlooked in Korea because, given its common race and culture, it has been assumed that everybody understands every one else without verbally communicating, and a special meaning is often found in the context rather than in the code. Thus, the contextual cues need to be understood to grasp the full meaning of the message.

Applying this cultural orientation to the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists, media relations in Korean culture is featured as a more implicit communication process than in the U.S. culture. In a Korean cultural context, the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists appreciates the personal relationship through press club system. The press club system makes the working relationship close and creates social networking, which precludes the news from a disseminating or gathering process with implicit communication beyond official news releases or formal interviews. Korean journalists often enjoy the context rather than the code provided by public relations professionals to get a unique scoop from the communicated message (Shin & Cameron, 2001).

Collectivism & Individualism

Hofstede (1980) identified a widely-used cultural dimension of collectivism versus individualism. Collectivism versus individualism represents the value of the group identity versus the value of individual's rights or characteristics. Whereas the U.S. culture emphasizes what is best for an individual, Korean culture is group-oriented by employing a "we" stance. The Korean culture is contingent on relations by referring to dependence groups, organizations or other collectivities and approaching collective problem solving. The U.S. culture is an inner-directed type rather than an other-directed in normative stance. Furthermore, "there is a strong feeling that individualism is good and collectivism bad" (Hofstede, 1980, p. 95). As individualism has been associated with modernity, a society degree of modernity has become a major determinant of societal norms: "Modern man (feels that) … he controls the reinforcement he receives from his environment… Traditional man has narrow in groups, … he sees interpersonal relations as an end, … he does not believe that he can control his environment (Triandis, 1972, p.8).

Applying this cultural dimension to the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists, both professionals in the U.S. tend toward mediated relationships by employing technologies in their working relationships to enhance self-driven professionalism, need a verb inner-directed normative sense and seek for what is best for an individual (Jonnson, 1997; Noack, 1999; Porter et al., 2001; Thompsen, 1996).In addition, both professions tend to seek interpersonal harmony with the other professions and search for intimate interactions and mutual solidarity in the working relationship in Korean cultural context, whereas both professionals in the U.S. play a role of source or reporter in a different direction.. The press club system is an institutionalized media system, which creates mutual dependence in the working relationship. Public relations professionals for an organization send press releases at the same time to journalists, who are belonging to the press club of the organization. These press releases include an embargo that is a stamp indicating the day from which a journalist can release the information. If a journalist violates the embargo, he or she is excluded from receiving further press releases from the press club. This policy helps contribute to the convenience of press releases and avoid an exclusive scoop, which results in reducing the conflictual aspects of the working relationship.

Power Distance

According to Hofstede (1980), power distance indicates the tolerance for social hierarchy and class structure. The U.S. culture is a low power distance culture, where egalitarianism and equality are valued. However, Korean culture is a high power distance culture, which exhibits power differentials by title and social standing. High power distance has been deemed to have the most effect on social network constructs by creating the hierarchy and inequality of power in the structure (Morley, 1998). In high power distance culture, relational or social orientation is important for power structure.

Applying this cultural dimension to the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists, high power distance particularly is important to Korean public relations professionals and journalists on the basis of their expected hierarchical cultural values. Since the relational and social orientation through the press club system is critical in Korean media relations, each professional is accustomed to the patterns for interacting with other profession in the system, where each is closely related to the other. The press club system is hierarchically structured to essentially contribute to the informational exchange between two professions. Journalists in Korea mostly depend on informational resources from public relations professionals through the structured and established human network.

Uncertainty Avoidance

Hofstede (1980) suggested that uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which members of a culture can tolerate and cope with risk or ambiguity. The U.S. culture is a high uncertainty avoidance culture, which tends to avoid risk, add formal structure, control to their environments and use technology. On the other hand, Korean culture is a low uncertainty avoidance culture, which is likely to take risk, create informal codes, accept ambiguity and emphasize human relations. Gudykunst (1997) suggested that a low uncertainty avoidance culture "accept distance and taking risks," whereas a high uncertainty avoidance culture "try to avoid ambiguity and therefore develop rules and rituals for virtually every possible situation …" (p. 330).

Applying this cultural dimension to the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists, the U.S. culture is a high uncertainty avoidance culture, where professionals are likely to formalize written codes of ethics and oriented to "higher levels of the importance of ethical problems" (Armstrong, 1996). Public relations professionals and journalists in the U.S. tend to employ technology in the working relationship as well as professional ethical codes to enhance their self-driven professionalism. On the other hand, Korean culture is a low uncertainty avoidance culture, where two professions tend to create informal codes in their working relationship. Their informatl exchange often occurs in informal settings, such as informal meetings with dinner or drinks, activities for friendship including golf/climbing, etc. Public relations professionals and journalists perceive their informal relations as ethical and influential in their news disseminating or gathering process (Shin & Cameron, 2001).

Time Orientation

Time orientation is related to the concept of monochronism or polychronism (Ackerman, 2000). The U.S. culture is oriented to monochromism and short-term relationship, where relationship is functional for the short term. On the other hand, Korean culture is oriented to polychronism and long-term relationship, where relationship is dysfunctional in situations that demand monochronic performance. Those with polychronic tendencies seek human interactions to establish and maintain long-term relationships beyond short-term working relationship.

Applying this cultural dimension to the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists, public relations practitioners and journalists establish and maintain human interactions through press club system beyond a short-term working relationship in Korean cultural context. The press club system constructs the social relations between two professionals for the continuity of their relationship. The system is structurally and institutionally established and maintained for news disseminating or gathering purpose of two professions. Public relations professionals and journalists appreciate the convenience of the news disseminating or gathering process through their human interactions. They reach mutual enlightenment and understanding of their long-term working relationships in the system.

Communication Matrix

A communication matrix is how various communication components are associated with a culture (Kanso & Alan, 2002). The U.S. culture is advanced with mass media communication, while interpersonal communication plays an important role in Korean culture. Interpersonal communication channels are commonly used for information processing. Human factors in interpersonal communication are a key element in Korean cultural context in spite of advances in technology. Relational orientation or social networking is based on interpersonal communication.

Applying this cultural dimension to the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists, computer or related technologies often play a central role in news disseminating or gathering process in the U.S. (Middleberg & Ross, 2000; Ryan, 1999). While public relations professionals in the U.S. culture are expected to serve time assertions in press releases (Lasica, 1997), professionals in Korean culture often serve position papers, providing events or background information as a word of mouth in interpersonal relationship. Also, public relations professionals and journalists employ interpersonal communication to develop personal influence with each other. Public relations professionals encourage informal relations, i.e. hosting dinner, drinking, golf, etc., in the relationship with journalists from whom they could ask for return favor later (Shin & Cameron, 2001; Sriramesh, 1991).

Based on the cultural dimensions, this study has examined how the cultural dimensions, i.e. high-context or low context, individualism or collectivism, high or low power distance, high or low uncertainty avoidance, monochronism or polychronism, or interpersonal or mediated communication, are applied to the conflict or conflict management styes of public relations professionals and journalists in Korea and the U.S. The concept of cultural dimensions is related to both cultures and profesions to provide a means of approaching the cultural variance in the conflict or conflict management styles of two professions. From previous studies, public relations professionals and journalists in Korean culture have been shown to be accustomed to a high context, collectivism, high power distance, low uncertainty avoidance, polychronism and interpersonal communication. Also, both professions in the U.S. culture have been shown to be oriented to low context, individualism, low power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, monochronism and mediated communication. This cultural difference in media relations basically is related to the press club system, which creates more personal influence on media relations in Korean cultural context.

A Cross-Cultural View of Conflict Management Styles in Media Relations

The conflict management literature identifies various types of conflict management strategies. Blake and Shepard's (1964) early developed a conflict model of management styles within a framework of two motivational dimensions: a self-oriented and an other-oriented concern. Deutsh (1973) also suggested a conflict management model with a notion that conflict management styles can be arrayed on a single dimension ranging from selfishness (concern about own outcomes) to cooperativeness (concern about the other party's outcomes). However, this model does not include styles that involve high concern for both self and other, and styles that involve a high concern for neither self nor other (Killman & Thomas, 1977).

Based on two dimensions of assertiveness (attempting to satisfy one's own concerns) and cooperation (attempting to satisfy the other person's concerns), Kilmann and Thomas (1977) developed five conflict styles: competing, compromising, collaborating, accommodating and avoiding. Competing is a mode in which one seeks for one's own concerns at the other party's expense. Compromising is a mode in which parties satisfy at least some of their concerns. Collaborating is an approach in which one attempts to work with the other party to find a mutually satisfying solution. Accommodating is a mode in which one ignores one's own concern to satisfy the concern of the other party. Avoiding is a mode in which one is not either assertive or cooperative. Rahim and Bonoma (1979) similarly modeled five styles in conflict management including integrating, obliging, dominating, compromising, avoiding on two dimensions of concern for self and concern for others.

However, the evidence from empirical studies has revealed that the five types of conflict management models showed mixed results (Jehn & Weldon, 1997). Rubin et al. (1994) argued that five conflict management strategies are not necessary in conflict management models. The important insight is that one's low concern for the other party occurs with two quite different styles, i.e. avoiding and collaborating, and competing and accommodating. Accordingly, the two styles of collaborating or competing likely explain how public relations practitioners and journalists manage conflict in their working relationship in different cultural contexts.

As cultural dimensions become incorporated into conflict management in public relations, there have been a lot of studies indicating the friction of conflict management styles in cultural orientations. Research on conflict management across cultures suggests that there are cultural differences in conflict management styles. Gudykunst (1993) found that members of high-context cultures employ non-confrontation orientation more than members of low-context cultures, while members of low-context cultures employed solution orientations more than members of high-context cultures.

Also, consistent with this research are findings from studies on conflict resolution styles of collectivist culture versus individualistic culture. Cathcart & Cathcart (1976) found that members of collectivist cultures value harmonious interpersonal relationship with others. Ting-Toomey (1991) also found that members of collectivist cultures avoid open conflict and prefer indirect or compromising style of conflict management. In the cultural orientation dimension, whereas Korean participants tended to used solution-oriented conflict strategies, North American participants tended to use either controlling or avoidance strategies (Lee & Logan, 1991).

Collectivist cultures t particularly are associated with power distance culture in conflict management styles. Members in collectivist cultures have shown a high power distance orientation on the basis of expected hierarchical cultural values and revealed less self-interest than members in individualism and low power distance cultures in conflict management (Brett & Okumura, 1998). Ting-Toomey et al. (2001) found that low power distance cultures had less concern for avoiding conflict management style and more concern for dominating conflict management styles through a survey of face or facework in conflict in China, Germany, Japan and the U.S. Relationship orientation also is related to conflict management styles.

Furthermore, Ganesan (1993) investigated the impact of time orientation in developing relationships with the public r based on the use of conflict resolution strategies such as problem solving, compromise and aggressiveness. Relationship duration was found to positively correlate with problem-solving or compromising strategies. As a relationship endures, continual communication or information exchange was found to help compromising or problem-solving approach to resolving conflicts in working relationship (Dwyer & Oh, 1987). Tse, Franis, and Walls (1994) found that the conflict resolution strategies of Canadian and Chinese were different in negotiating across cultures. Chinese participants were more likely to avoid conflicts but recommended more negative strategies (discontinue negotiation; withdraw negotiation) particularly when person-related conflicts emerged. This finding implies that interpersonal relationship or communication can be a key element related to conflict or conflict management.

From the conflict management literature in different cultures, this study examined how the conflict in the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists can be managed in Korea and the U.S. Both public relations professionals and journalists are likely to use more compromising or problem-solving strategies in their professional relationship in Korean culture, while both professions are oriented to employ competing or confronting strategies in the U.S. culture. Korean professionals tend to be accustomed to interpersonal strategies because human factors play a crucial role in Korean culture. More fundamentally, they appreciate harmonious interpersonal relationship in a Korean context. The conflict between public relations professionals and journalist in Korean media system can be bigger than the conflict between two professions in the U.S media system because conflict management styles are associated with cultural difference.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the outset, this study focused on the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists where they play conflictual roles of source and reporter (Cameron, Sallot, & Curtin, 1997; Shin & Cameron, 2002). Some of the source-reporter relationship is based on the previous studies regarding personal influence on media relations (Shin & Cameron, 2001; Sriramesh, Kim, & Takasaki, 1999). The other source-reporter relationship is involved in mediated relationship, where public relations professionals and journalists interact as source and reporter using the Internet and related technologies (Ha & James, 2000; Hill & White, 2000; Garrison, 1995; Garrison, 1997; Garrison, 2000; Holtz, 1999; Marlow, 1996; O'Keefe, 1997; Whalther,1996). This study aimed at identifying what is the conflict between two professions and how they approach the conflict in Korea and the U.S. by examining the cultural difference in interpersonal or mediated media relations.

Considering the cultural variance, it is predicted that the professions in Korea will exhibit a different perspective of the source-reporter relationship from those in the U.S. The professionals in Korea will be inclined to employ more interpersonal source-reporter relationship techniques because they are more accustomed to, and concerned about implicit, indirect, informal and interpersonal interactions, which is closely related to high-context, collectivism, high power distance, low uncertainty avoidance, polychronic time orientation, interpersonal communication. On the other hand, the professionals in the U.S. will tend to use more mediated source-reporter relationship techniques because they are more accustomed to, and concerned about, explicit, direct, formal and mediated interactions. All of these interactions are closely related to low-context, individualism, low power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, monochronic time orientation and mediated communication.

As associated with cultural difference of media relations, both public relations professionals and journalists are likely to use more compromising or problem-solving conflict management strategies in their working relationship in Korean culture, while both professions are oriented to employ competing or confronting conflict management strategies in the U.S. culture. Accordingly, the conflict between public relations professionals and journalists in Korean media system will be bigger than the conflict between two professions in the U.S media system. Therefore, the research questions and hypotheses are.

RQ1: What are the dominating factors that are associated with the conflict between public relations professionals and journalists in Korea and the U.S.?

H1: There will be greater influence as a function of culture in difference than as a function of professions in conflict, with both public relations professionals and journalists in Korea being more attuned to interpersonal techniques than public relations professionals and journalists in the U.S.

RQ2: What is the attitudinal difference in the conflict management styles of Korean professionals and the U.S. professionals?

H2: The conflict between public relations professionals and journalists will be greater in the U.S. media system than in Korean media system, with both public relations professionals and journalists in Korea being more oriented to compromising or problem-solving strategies.

METHODS

In order to examine the professional conflict in different cultures, mail surveys and follow-up efforts to collect completed surveys were conducted among public relations professionals and journalists in Korea and the U.S. Each sample of 400 public relations professionals with a margin of error of 5 percent was respectively drawn from the directory of Korean Public Relations Association (2000) and Public Relations Society of America's member roster (2000). Also, each sample of 400 journalists with a margin of error of 5 percent was selected from the directory of Journalists Association of Korea (2000), and Editors & Publishers' member roster (2000) and Bacon Directory (2000). The samples consist of randomly selected public relations professionals working at agencies, corporations, non-profit organizations and government organizations, and randomly selected journalists working at daily newspaper offices, broadcasting/radio stations and wire services.

The questionnaire was based on the literature pertaining to the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists. The relationship variables from the previous studies along with a set of demographic variables were used as discriminating variables in the statistical analysis. They include 11 types of interpersonal source-reporter relationships (i.e. telephone contact, fax/mail/wire/courier press releases, speeches, interviews, press conferences, background briefings, official proceedings, press tours, private meetings, drink/dinner/luncheon, and gathering activities including golf), and 9 types of mediated source-reporter relationship (i.e. e-mail news releases, multimedia press kits, streaming audio/video clips, online inquiry, online interviews/ web chatting, organizational homepages, website pressrooms, Internet video conference, and online discussion group/ forum). Demographic questions on information such as age, gender, education, work, position, working years, online access frequency, online access time, knowledge of online use in news disseminating/gathering, influence of online media on news disseminating/gathering, and preference for online news disseminating/ gathering are included for the additional analysis.

The survey asked respondents to assess the degree of "usefulness," "influence," "credibility," "ethics" and "professionalism," with each 11 types of interpersonal source-reporter relationship and 9 types of mediated source-reporter relationships by measuring on a 5-point Likert-type scale, where 1 is "not useful," "not influential," "not credible," "not ethical" and "not professional," and 5 is "very useful," "very influential," "very credible," "very ethical" and "very professional." The questionnaire, with a battery of 100 questions (20 types in 5 terms), was transmitted via mail, fax and e-mail in Korea and the U.S. from June to July 2001. A follow-up reminder was transmitted via mail, fax and e-mail in Korea and the U.S. from July and August 2001. The survey yielded 339 total usable responses for a 21 percent return rate.

RESULTS

The purpose aimed at determining if professional and cultural variables could make an accurate discrimination among public relations professionals and journalists in Korea and the U.S. cultures. The conflict between the two professional groups has been demonstrated in research, and the U.S. public relations practice has been positioned as a leading trend, whereas Korean public relations practice includes the unique non-Western culture. The discrimination function analysis identifies variables that distinguish public relations professionals and journalists, and distinguishes the Korean professionals from the U.S. professionals. The combination of professional and cultural variances categorizes the four groups (Korean public relations professionals, Korean journalists, U.S. public relations professionals and U.S. journalists) on two dimensions. The discrimination functions could be employed toward identifying likely strategic types of media relations in managing the conflict in source-reporter relationship.

Demographic Characteristics

Questions were included to determine the respondent's gender, age, work, position and working year. The subjects were from four groups of Korean public relations professionals, Korean journalists, U.S. public relations professionals and U.S. journalists.

Of the 339 professionals participating in the survey, 53 percent were public relations professionals (N=179), and 47 percent were journalists (N=160). Some 34 percent of the respondents were the U.S. professionals (N=114), and 66 percent were Korean professionals (N=225).

About a half were 30-39 years old(N=140), and another approximate half were younger than 30 (N=60) and 40-49 (N=79), with the oldest groups at ages between 50-59 (N=25) and more than 60 years old(N=3). About two thirds were male (N=203), and another approximate third were female (N= 104). Some 76 percent of the professionals possessed bachelor degrees (N=234), while 22.8 percent have acquired master's degree (N=67) and doctoral degrees (N=3). Only 1.3 percent reported "some high school" (N=4). Some 37 percent of public relations professionals reported being affiliated with corporations (N=73), 29.9 percent working with agencies (N=59) and the rest with nonprofit organizations (N=6) and non private organizations (N=7); while some 66 percent of journalists (N=94) reported working for newspapers, with the rest working for broadcast (N=8), radio (N=1), wire (N=8) and magazine (N=4). Some 48.4 percent of the respondents were editors or management levels (N=136), while 33 percent were reporter or staff level positioned (N=139). Almost 33 percent have worked for less than 5 years (N=95); 26 percent for 5-9 years (N=75); 19.4 percent for 10-14 years (N=56); 9.4 percent for 15-19 years (N=27), 4.5 percent for 20-24 years (N=13), 4.5 percent for 25-29 years (N=13) and 3.1 percent for more than 30 years (N=9).

Insert Table 1 about here

Discriminant Factors in the Cultural Dimension of Media Relations

Discriminant function analysis was employed to identify the combination of variables that best distinguish the four groups from each other. This analysis enabled simultaneous evaluation of various types of source-reporter techniques as discriminators, adjusting for Type 1 error resulting when numerous significance tests are made. The variables on the combination of both professional and cultural dimensions, which discriminated Korean public relations professionals, Korean journalists, U.S. public relations professionals and U.S. journalists showed high values in group membership prediction with two functions (Function 1: Canonical correlation=0.962, Wilks' Lamda= 0.004, Chi-square=914.464, p=0.000; Function 2: Canonical correlation=0.910, Wilks' Lamda=0.059, Chi-square=477.506, p=0.000). The Chi-square test computed during discriminant analysis indicated that two statistically significant functions were found, and the Wilks' Lamda values also indicated that the two functions account for most of the explanatory value to be derived from the discriminating variables. Some 97.8 percent of original grouped cases were correctly classified (94.9 percent of Korean public relations professionals group, 100 percent of Korean journalists group, 100 percent of U.S. public relations professionals group, and 100 percent of U.S. journalists group), and accounted for by the two functions of profession and culture. Similar to the separate dimension analysis, a function of culture suggested a higher value ingroup membership prediction than a function of profession.

Table 2 identifies the contribution each variable makes to each of the two functions independent of all other variables. By examining the correlations between a function and individual variables, intuitive labels can be given to functions that best describe the meaning of each function. The variables appearing on the cultural dimension mostly are related to interpersonal types of source-reporter relationship in terms of ethics (i.e. interviews, telephone contact, fax/mail/courier press releases, press tours, press conferences, speeches, drink/dinner/luncheon, official proceedings, etc). On the other hand, the variables appearing on the professional dimension mostly are related to mediated types of source-reporter relationships in terms of usefulness, influence and professionalism (i.e. website pressrooms, multimedia press kits, streaming audio/video clips, organizational homepages and etc.). The results suggest that the cultural dimension can be accounted for by interpersonal types of source-reporter relationships.

Insert Table 2 about here

A two dimensional depiction of how the variables work to differentiate the four groups is presented in Figure 1. The discriminant function centroids to differentiate Korean professions and the U.S. professions are somewhat distributed along the cultural function but less so along the professional function. The Korean professional groups tend toward negative values on Function 1, while the U.S. professional groups tend in the opposite direction along the dimension (Group centroids; Korean public relations professionals: -3.043, Korean journalists: -1.274; U.S. journalists: 4.557; U.S. public relations professionals: 5.069). With the negative values of within-groups correlations presented in table 2, the results show that Korean professionals tend positively toward the interpersonal source-reporter relationship, whereas the U.S. professionals tend negatively toward the interpersonal source-reporter relationship.

Function 2 is effective in consistently separating U.S. public relations professionals and U.S. journalists, but Korean public relations professionals and journalists display a mixed pattern along the dimension. Nonetheless, Korean and U.S. public relations professionals tend toward negative values on Function 1, while Korean and US journalists group in the opposite direction along the dimension (Group centroids; US journalists: 3.609; US public relations professionals: -3.668; Korean public relations professionals: -0.487; Korean journalists: 0.943). The results show that public relations professionals tend to desire the mediated source-reporter relationship, with the positive values of within-groups correlations presented in table 2.

Therefore, Function 1 is effective in discriminating U.S. from Korean professionals, which reflects the cultural variance between Korea and the U.S., while profession is undifferentiated along the dimension. Function 2 is effective in separating groups into U.S. public relations professionals and US journalists, and also slightly discriminating Korean public relations professionals and Korean journalists, which replicates the professional difference.

Insert Figure 1 about here

DISCUSSION

As hypothesized by this study, distinguishing by culture appears to provide a useful extension of the conflict or conflict management models in the source-reporter relationships in different cultures. The discriminant function of cultural difference is more distinguishing in the source-reporter relationship than as a function of professional conflict. By introducing the distinction, it was found that the conflict in the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists is influenced by cultural differences for most members of the designated population in terms of interpersonal source-reporter relationship. That is, the dominating factors to discriminate the U.S. professionals and Korean professionals are interpersonal types of source-reporter relationships, i.e. ratings for interviews, telephone contact, fax/mail/courier press releases, press tours, press conferences, speeches, drink/dinner/luncheon, official proceedings, etc.

Public relations professionals and journalists in Korea are less conflict – oriented or more attuned to interpersonal techniques than public relations professionals and journalists in the U.S. This is no different from the previous studies regarding personal influence on media relations in Asian countries and, particularly, on informal relations in Korea (Shin & Cameron, 2001; Sriramesh, Kim, & Takasaki, 1999). Korean professionals may tend to employ more interpersonal media relationship techniques because they are inherently more accustomed to, and concerned about implicit, indirect, informal, closed and interpersonal interactions than explicit, direct, formal, open and mediated interactions. It is possible that human factors still play an important role in the source-reporter relationship in spite of advances in mediated communication technology.

As the second hypothesis stated, the conflict between public relations professionals and journalists is greater in the U.S. media system than in the Korean media system, with both public relations professionals and journalists in Korea being more oriented to compromising or problem-solving strategies. Based on the interpersonal relationship, Korean public relations professionals and journalists may be closer to each other in their working relationships. Both professions may tend to seek for interpersonal harmony with the other profession, especially encouraging intimate interactions and mutual solidarity in the Korean cultural context. Both professionals in the U.S. tend toward mediated relationship by employing computer or related technologies in their working relationship to enhance self-driven professionalism, inner-directed normative sense and what is best for an individual (Jonnson, 1997; Porter et al., 2001; Thompsen, 1996).

The findings here suggest that the conflict-oriented nature and conflict management styles in the relationship between public relations professionals and journalists reflect political, economic and social elements of a culture as a product of a culture. In the Korean cultural context, the press club system is structured hierarchically to essentially contribute to the informational exchange and enhance the mutual dependence between two professions in the working relationship. The press club system may be mediating the conflict between two professions by constructing the social relations between two professionals to maintain the working relationship for news disseminating or gathering purpose. Journalists mostly depend on informational resources from public relations professionals in the media system, and public relations practitioners have more power in working relationship with journalists in the Korean culture than in the U.S. culture. On the other hand, both professionals are likely to empower themselves by employing computer or related technologies in the working relationship, i.e. website pressrooms, multimedia press kits, streaming audio/video clips, organizational homepages and etc. This may bring about a more conflict-based relationship, and more competing or confronting conflict management styles.

Also, the two professionals in the U.S culture are likely to formalize written codes of ethics to enhance their self-driven professionalism and empowerment in the working relationship, whereas in Korean culture, the two professions tend to create informal codes in their working relationship in. Information exchange often occurs in informal relations, i.e. informal meetings with dinner or drinks, golf, etc. where public relations professionals ask for a return favor, i.e. favorable coverage in Korean media system. Public relations professionals and journalists perceive their informal relations as ethical and influential in news disseminating or gathering process (Shin & Cameron, 2001; 2002).

Public relations professionals and journalists appreciate the convenience of news disseminating or gathering process through the press club system. They reach mutual enlightenment and understanding of their long-term working relationship in the system. While public relations professionals in the U.S. culture are expected to serve time assertions in press releases, professionals in Korean culture often provide position papers, providing events or background information as a word of mouth in the interpersonal relationship. Korean journalists often enjoy the context rather than the code provided by public relations professionals to get a unique story that is read between the lines of the press release. Journalists tend to mistrust information officially publicized by organizations and prefer indirect, closed, privatized or informal information for autonomy and motivations of self-serving in their news selection process. Implicit communication beyond official press releases or formal interviews are important in the work relationship on the basis of their expected patterns for interacting with each other in Korean culture.

The findings here also suggest the practical and managerial implications to both public relations professionals and journalists. Public relations professionals and journalists should understand that cultural values play an important role in the source-reporter relationship, and, when approaching the source-reporter relationship in different cultures, both professions as source or reporter should prepare to settle the business, social, economic, political and cultural complexities inherent in the national settings. As opposed to the media relations design in the U.S. culture, the interpersonal types of media relations techniques should be employed to the likely strategic conflict management in the source-reporter relationship in Korean culture because the personal and informal factors remain an integral part of media relations in Korean culture (i.e. interviews, telephone contact, fax/mail/courier press releases, press tours, drink/dinner/luncheon, etc.). Also, Korean professionals tend to employ comprising or problem-solving conflict management styles rather than confronting or contending conflict management styles, which result with less conflict between two professionals in Korea than in the U.S.

Overall, this study has examined how the cultural dimensions, i.e. high-context or low context, collectivism or individualism, high or low power distance, low or high uncertainty avoidance, polychronism or monochronism, and interpersonal or mediated communication, are applied to the professional conflict or conflict management styles of public relations professionals and journalists. The results support a cross-cultural perspective of conflict and conflict management strategies in media relations. Public relations professionals and journalists in Korean culture are less likely to seek conflict or more attuned to interpersonal source-reporter relationship. This basically is related to the press club system, which creates more personal influence on media relations in the controlled, restricted, structured or institutionalized system.

This finding suggests that the traditional conflict between public relations professionals and journalists can be resolved, or at least ameliorated by employing a cross-cultural approach in a cultural context. The conflict between public relations professionals and journalists may be managed by interpersonal techniques in high context, collectivism, low power distance, low uncertainty avoidance, polychronism and mediated communication oriented cultures. This study has tested a theoretical potential of conflict or conflict management models in public relations from cross-cultural perspective, but more specific models of conflict management strategies should be developed for the effectiveness of media relations in different cultures. Such a model will help develop a more comprehensive public relations theory.

Insert Figure 2 about here

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APPENDIX

Table 1

Demographic Statistics (N=339)

		KPR	KJOUR	USPR	USJOUR	TOTAL	
		percent	*percent*	*percent*	*percent*	*frequency*	*percent*
Age	Less than 30	30.2	14.9	9.4	10.6	60	19.5
	30 - less than 40	53.5	44.8	40.6	31.9	140	45.6
	40 - less than 50	14.0	40.3	31.3	29.8	79	25.7
	50 - less than 60	2.3	0.0	18.8	21.3	25	8.1
	More than 60	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.4	3	1.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	307	100.0
Gender	Male	68.2	88.1	46.9	55.3	203	66.1
	Female	31.8	11.9	53.1	44.7	104	33.9
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	307	100.0
Education	Under college graduate	1.6	1.5	84.8	2.1	4	1.3
	College graduate	73.4	68.7	15.2	80.9	234	76.0
	Master	24.2	28.4	0.0	14.9	67	21.8
	Ph.D.	0.8	1.5	0.0	2.1	3	1.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	308	100.0
Work	Agency (Newspaper)	40.5	76.1	12.1	89.6	-	-
	Corporation (Broadcast)	42.1	7.5	30.3	6.3	-	-
	Non-profit (Radio)	14.3	1.5	42.4	4.2	-	-
	Private (Wire)	0.0	11.9	0.0	0.0	-	-
	Government (Magazine)	2.4	3.0	9.1	0.0	-	-
	Other	0.8	0.0	6.1	0.0	-	-
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	307	100.0
Position	Staff level (Reporter)	33.3	64.4	66.7	33.3	136	47.4
	Managing level (Editor)	64.9	35.6	24.2	58.3	139	48.4
	Other	1.8	0.0	9.1	8.3	12	4.2
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	287	100.0
Working year	Less than 5	51.7	20.7	30.3	6.3	95	33.0
	5 - less than 10	29.3	27.6	21.2	22.9	75	26.0
	10 - less than 15	13.8	36.2	21.2	10.4	56	19.4
	15 - less than 20	3.4	15.5	9.1	16.7	27	9.4
	20 - less than 25	1.7	0.0	9.1	10.4	13	4.5
	25-less than 30	0.0	0.0	6.1	18.8	13	4.5
	30-more than 30	0.0	0.0	3.0	14.6	9	3.1
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	288	100.0

Note: Percent represents valid percent.

Table 2
Correlations of Significant Functions and Discriminating Variables

FUNCTION	1: Culture	2: Profession
interviews_ethical	0.222*	0.011
telephone contact_ethical	0.184*	0.028
fax/mail/wire/courier_ethical	0.184*	-0.063
press tours_ethical	0.180*	-0.107
golf/gathering_useful	-0.176*	-0.015
press conferences_ethical	0.164*	-0.020
interviews_professional	0.158*	-0.017
speeches_ethical	0.148*	-0.040
fax/mail/courier_professional	0.148*	-0.038
multimedia press kits_ethical	0.138*	-0.041
drink/dinner/luncheon_ethical	0.136*	0.049
telephone contact_professional	0.133*	0.052
interviews_credible	0.129*	0.008
golf/gathering_influential	-0.127*	-0.059
preference for online use	0.126*	0.085
fax/mail/courier_credible	0.125*	-0.032
interviews_useful	0.124*	0.026
fax/mail/courier_useful	0.118*	-0.056
official proceedings_ethical	0.109*	0.033
speeches_professional	0.106*	-0.066
private meetings_ethical	0.100*	0.076
drink/dinner/luncheon_professional	0.097*	0.039
online discussion_credible	-0.090*	-0.026
e-mail news release_ethical	0.087*	-0.050
press conferences_professional	0.086*	0.027
interviews_influential	0.085*	-0.008
background briefings_ethical	0.085*	-0.026
online discussion_professional	-0.069*	0.015
background briefings_credible	0.066*	-0.002
online discussion_ethical	-0.063	-0.012
background briefings_useful	0.062*	0.033
speeches_credible	0.060*	-0.022
streaming clips_credible	-0.057*	-0.048
Internet conference_ethical	0.038*	-0.034
background briefings_influential	0.031*	0.012
work	0.063	-0.248*
working year	0.164	0.198*
website pressrooms_useful	0.069	-0.164*
multimedia press kits_influential	-0.012	-0.162*
website pressrooms_influential	0.066	-0.161*
multimedia press kits_useful	-0.015	-0.160*
website pressrooms_credible	0.108	-0.158*

website pressrooms_professional	0.081	-0.149*
streaming clips_influential	-0.044	-0.136*
homepages_professional	0.101	-0.135*
website pressrooms_ethical	0.075	-0.131*
press tours_useful	-0.026	-0.128*
streaming clips_useful	-0.079	-0.125*
homepages_ethical	0.057	-0.118*
age	0.105	0.117*
Internet conference_useful	-0.013	-0.112*
e-mail news releases_influential	0.017	-0.112*
homepages_useful	0.096	-0.109*
Internet conference_influential	-0.027	-0.108*
press tours_credible	0.015	-0.107*
Internet conference_professional	0.018	-0.107*
press tours_professional	0.081	-0.101*
e-mail news releases_professional	0.073	-0.098*
homepages_credible	0.092	-0.097*
homepages_influential	0.040	-0.097*
e-mail news releases_useful	0.009	-0.092*
press tours_influential	-0.017	-0.091*
speeches_influential	0.055	-0.089*
private meetings_useful	0.000	0.089*
multimedia press kits_credible	0.060	-0.085*
Internet confererence_credible	0.017	-0.082*
streaming clips_professional	-0.053	-0.075*
press conferences_credible	0.060	-0.071*
fax/mail/courier_influential	0.025	-0.068*
press conferences_influential	-0.002	-0.068*
golf/gathering_ethical	-0.025	0.067*
private meetings_credible	0.052	0.065*
streaming clips_ethical	0.020	-0.040*
drink/dinner/luncheon_credible	0.029	0.039*
drink/dinner/luncheon_influential	-0.011	-0.022*

Notes: Pooled within-groups correlations between discriminating variables and standardized canonical discriminant functions; Variables ordered by absolute size of correlation within function.

* Largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function.

Figure 1

Canonical Discriminant Function Centroids in Discriminant Space

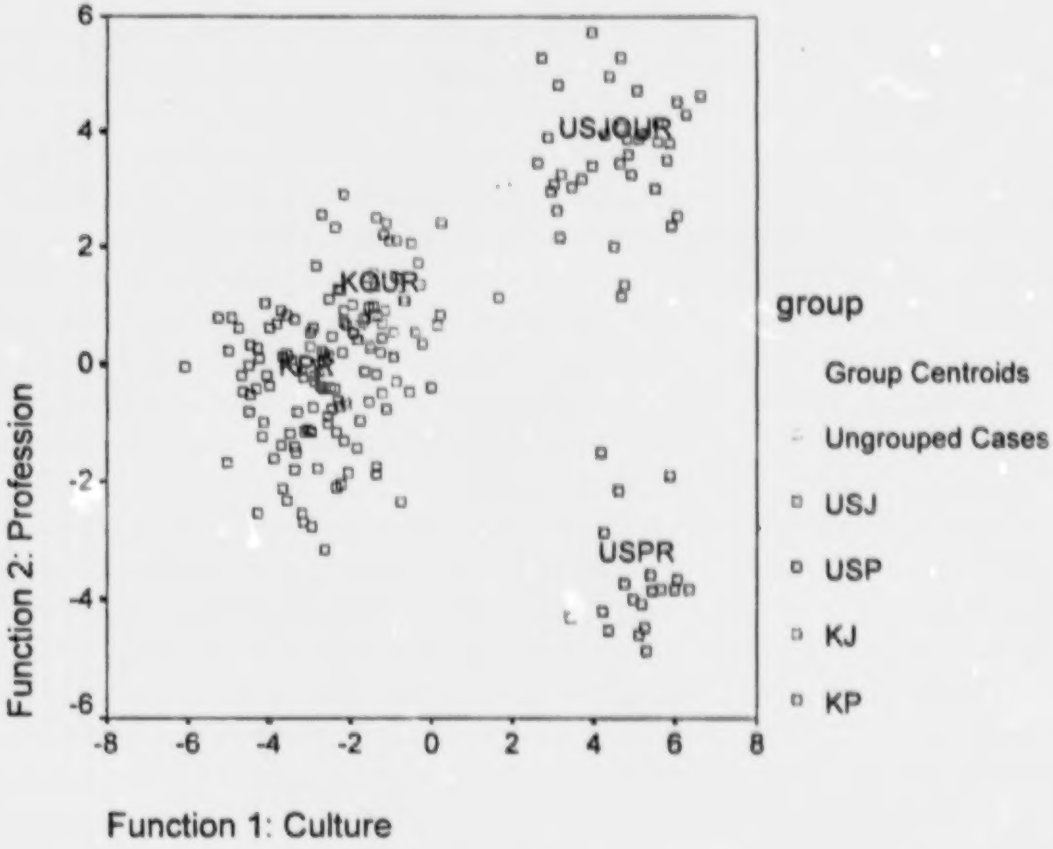

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Figure 2

The Conflict Management Typology of Media Relations in Korea and in the U.S.

	Comprising Problem-solving	Competing Confronting
Implicit Collectivistic High PD Low UA Polychronic Interpersonal	Korean Media Relations	
Explicit Individual Low PD* High UA* Monochronic Mediated		American Media Relations

Notes: * PD: Power Distance; UA: Uncertainty Avoidance

Asking What Matters Most:
A National Survey of PR Professional Response to the Contingency Model

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ABSTRACT

Asking What Matters Most:
A National Survey of PR Professional Response to the Contingency Model

For the first time, a random sample of public relations professionals assessed 86 factors in the contingency theory of public relations. This study aims at identifying what contingent factors matter most in public relations practice to provide public relations professionals with a refinement of the contingency factors in public relations activities. Support was found for a matrix of variables affecting public relations practice, and organizational factors (i.e. top management, public relations department, organizational culture, etc.) were identified that affect the contingency undertaken by public relations practitioners in a given situation. The findings suggest that, in practice, practitioners consider some factors as dominating. This gives parsimony to the matrix of 86 variables offered initially in the matrix. Organizational factors are viewed by practitioners as the most influential dynamic to public relations activities. Overall, the practitioners' view of their activities offers validity to the contingency theory for the further development.

INTRODUCTION

Attempts to define public relations and its exact role in organizations and society have yielded arguments about what public relations "is" and what it "should be" (Cropp & Pincus, 2001). A lot of literature on theories and models has suggested what public relations is or should be. Grunig and Hunt (1984) identified public relations as the management of communication between an organization and its publics. They proposed four modes of public relations to represent the public relations field and discipline: press agentry or publicity, public information, two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric model. Later, Grunig, Grunig, and Dozier (2001) suggested that "whereas two-way symmetrical model represents normative theory, excellent public relations consists of some combination of the symmetrical and asymmetrical models" (p. 2).

Developing the prevailing thought of two-way symmetrical public relations, many scholars have reconceptualized the two-way symmetrical and one-way asymmetrical models (Cancel, Cameron, Sallot, & Mitrook, 1997; Cameron, Cropp, & Reber, 2001). Hellweg (1989) suggested the notions of two-way symmetrical and one-way asymmetrical depend heavily on one's perspective, which varies on a continuum. Murphy (1991) proposed the mixed motive view from conflict to cooperation. Leichty (1997) discussed the limits of collaboration, that is, collaborative public relations is unfeasible in some situations. Public relations activities involve asymmetric or win-lose situations. Individual public relations practitioners' lack of power within an organization increases the limitation of collaboration. Murphy (2000) explored complexity in public relations by introducing the concept of power and accommodation to "uncontrollable" public relations. Duffy (2000) further argued that there is no two-way symmetric public relations.

Cameron and his colleagues (1997; 1999; 2001; 2002) developed the idea of mixed motive or collaborative advocacy into contingency theory. They suggested a welter of factors limiting accommodation in public relations. In the excellence model, communication flows both ways between an organization and a public while both are prepared to change their own behavior, and the result is posited as the most professional, ethical and effective practice (Grunig, 1989; Grunig & Grunig, 1992; Grunig, Grunig, &

Ehling, 1998). However, contingency theory offers qualifications and reservations of excellence theory with a number of reasons: personal ethics, comfort with conflict, moral conviction, mistrust of public, multiple publics, relative power requiring activism, the dominant coalition's values and style, management pressure, organization precedent setting, stakes for organization, regulatory constraints, jurisdictional issues and legal constraints, societal base, moral ambiguity, qualifying dialogue between an organization and a public, and others.

Cameron and his associates (1997; 1999; 2001; 2002) built the contingency theory from the ground up by interviewing top public relations practitioners to learn whether such proscriptive factors work in their public relations practice and defined professional practice in public relations. They also characterized 86 factors into 11 categories including threats, industry environment, political/social/cultural environment, external publics, issue under question, organization's characteristics, PR department characteristics, management characteristics, internal threats, individual characteristics and relationship characteristics. However, there is no empirical study has been conducted on the contingent factors to govern public relations practice. This study attempts to empirically examine the contingent factors that influence pubic relations activities and identify the distinctive factors.

Since public relations has been defined as "the distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends" (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994), public relations practice should be analyzed considering a number of internal and external variables that may influence public relations practice on individual, organizational and societal levels. Individual public relations practitioners essentially work for an organization; their function is usually defined within the organization; and the organization also interacts within such institutions as economy, politics, society and culture. Many different aspects can essentially be linked to how public relations is practiced as a boundary function of an organization. By examining what matters most in public relations, this study assumes that an adequate normative theory of public relations practice will have a developmental component built into contingency theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Testing the Validity of Public Relations Theory

Grunig and Grunig (1992) investigated public relations of more than 300 organizations in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. They developed a generic theory of public relations by exploring normative factors of effective public relations. They argued that "A normative theory of public relations would specify that organizations should plan public relations strategically, especially when they face a turbulent environment." However, it is questioned if it is appropriate to impose public relations norms on the practices. The one-way asymmetric or two-way symmetric public relations models have not suggested any perspective for possible variability in public relations practice. An attempt should be made to fill this gap by developing a two-dimensional model and empirically testing its validity in public relations practice.

Public relations practice essentially has something to do with the role of public relations, and in turn, the functions of public relations often describe what public relations is. Public relations practitioners fundamentally serve as conduits between organizational management, and internal or external constituencies for the total communication for the parties; and the organization is the entity interacting with the economic, political, social and cultural environment (Baskin & Arnoff, 1992; Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994; Newsom, Turk, & Kruckeberg, 1996). Outlining public relations functions by organizational framework may yield useful insights into an organization's communication with publics, with an emphasis on a managerial perspective.

Since public relations functions ultimately are defined within the scope of organizational communication as the distinctive management function (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994; Ehling, 1992; Grunig, Gruing, & Dozier, 2001; Wilcox, Ault, Agee, & Cameron, 2001), external or internal variability in public relations practice and theory needs to be identified for the improvement of practice and the development of theory. Cameron (1998) suggested that "a normative model to define excellent public relations is too inflexible for circumstances encountered daily in the external environment managed by public relations practitioners'" (p.40). He also proposed the influence of such internal variables as the dominant coalition, the dominant coalition's decision making power and enlightenment, and individual characteristics of public relations practitioners.

Considering the variability in public relations practice, public relations models need to be refined by being associated with a number of contingent factors rather than being aggregated across levels. To develop a holistic approach to public relations, theoretical descriptions of public relations should systematically be explored within and across contextual levels. Long and Hazelton (1987) defined public relations as "a communication function of management through which organizations adapt to, alter, or maintain their environment for the purpose of achieving organizational goals." They provided public relations process models to consider quantitative and qualitative aspects of public relations behavior and to permit analysis within and across subsystems.

Cameron and his colleagues (1997; 1999; 2001; 2002) have selected the opportunity to develop a schema for describing and categorizing differences in public relations practice by identifying factors, not addressed in the symmetry or asymmetry matrix of public relations models. They have demonstrated that public relations is relative in both its theories and in its techniques— inferring that a range of asymmetrical models may be most appropriate for a given situation with an emphasis on political/social/cultural environment, organizational contexts and individual differences. It reasonably follows to develop a contingent variance capable of embracing a wide range of public relations models by and investigating what contingent factors can be most dominantly associated or discriminated with the unique profile activities mostly within the scope of organizational communication.

External Variables to Influence Public Relations

Cameron and his associates (1997; 1999; 2001) suggested a number of contingent factors that influence public relations practice. They divided the contingent factors into two dimensions -- external variables and internal variables. The external variables are thematically categorized into (1) threats from legal, government, media institutions; (2) industry environment; (3) political, social, cultural environment; (4) the external publics; and (5) the issue under questions.

According to Lesly (1991), a number of factors, including geographical and social spheres, have contributed to the creation of the current public relations practice. An organization itself conducts its activities within legal, political, social and cultural environments, and in turn, the organizational environment influences the success or failure of an organization. Seiter (1995) examined organizational environments through a case study of a lumber company's internal and external influence attempts. The combination of environmental legislation, environmentalist attacks and a sluggish economy posed a threat to the company's image, resources, financial stability and continued viability.

Litigation public relations is an emerging field in crisis communication management of enormous contemporary significance (Gibson & Padilla, 2000). Government regulation is another potential threat to the management of an organization, and accordingly to public relations roles (Foley, 1990; Harriss, 1991; Lee, 1999). The impact of negative newspaper publicity has been essential to public relations activities, since negative publicity severely damages corporate image (Ahluwalia, Burnkrant, & Unnava, 2001; Renkema & Hoeken, 1998). Also, the organization's reputation in the community is one of the leading factors influencing organizational activities. An organization should be responsive to community concerns and consider its reputation. Accordingly, public relations practitioners should anticipate negative conditions, pressures, events or trends that may seriously undermine the mission of an organization (Useem, 1988). Nevertheless, public relations practitioners perceive limited options in how they may respond to a situation (Leichty, 1997).

Industry environment is another important factor to be considered in public relations activities to support the management function of an organization. In a dynamic environment, heightened competition, wide-ranging opportunities and threats have been identified as some of the most pressing issues in public relations practice (Dibb, Simkin, & Vancini, 1996). Although corporate management needs the services of public relations in today's rapidly changing industrial environment, public relations practitioners are not perceived as knowledgeable of such corporate issues (Barstow, 1984).

Also, Wilson (1990) noted that public relations practice has largely ignored the political and economic changes in corporate business occurring throughout the world and is mostly based on narrow political, economic, social and cultural assumptions. The combination of economic, political, social environment and external culture poses level of constraint or uncertainty to an organization's image, resources, financial stability and continued viability, where public relations plays an important role in the lifeline of an organization (Seiter, 1995).

As one of the most conceptually problematic notions in public relations, a public is a great concern in public relations. Using Grunig and Hunt's (1984) definition, a public is an easily identifiable public that functions as a linkage to the organization; for example, the board of directors, stockholders, customers, employees, or other organizations within the industry (Communication World, 1991). Baskin and Arnoff (1992) agreed that publics can be defined as persons who are a readily identifiable group related to the organization. By employing public relations as a paradigmatic instance of strategic communication, Botan and Soto (1998) challenged the prevailing view of publics as reactive entities and suggested that a public can be understood as an active entity in an ongoing process. Recently, the formation of coalition as external publics is an increasingly important tool of special interest groups. These groups create an ongoing relationship within which an organization is regularly challenged to respond to ethical matters and assess the organization's moral status (Bodensteiner, 1997). Through a Sierra Club study, Grunig (1989) reported that members of active publics who join interest groups help create constraints on organizational autonomy, thereby causing public relations problems, and programs to solve them.

Accordingly, public relations professionals should be concerned with assisting management in preparing in advance for possible conflicts with organized people over particular issues. Their "problematizing" of unquestioned, absolute allegiance to an organization brings the recognition of publics the organization communicates to, in turn encouraging the involvement to the external groups or individuals on issues under question (Olasky, 1984; 1985). An issue arises as a consequence of some action taken or proposed to be taken by an organization and/or one or more of its publics. It concerns how an organization is involved with its external publics (Hainsworth, 1990).

Overall, many studies have revealed that all the external factors influence public relations activities even by being associated or potentially combined with one another. In this study, a number of the external constraints, i.e. threats, industry environment, level of constraint from political/social/cultural environment, the external publics, and issue under question were examined to test the validity of a welter of factors influencing public relations practice. Considering the contingent variability in public relations practice reflected in the scholarly research, a descriptive study may provide the best means to understand what matters most in public relations practice and benefit public relations practitioners eager to unravel the qualifications of the normative principles of public relations.

Internal Variables to Influence Public Relations

Public relations is a part of organizational activities (Broom & Dozier, 1986; Grunig et al., 2001; Cameron et al., 2001) Public relations practitioners employed within organizations must work under the constraints imposed by the organization (i.e. public relations department, top management, other internal factors). These constraints involve how public relations is practiced in the scope of organization. According to Sweep, Cameron and Lariscy (1994), the constraints include two domains: "(1) the extent to which a practitioner fulfills the manager or the technician role; (2) the extent to which various models of public relations are employed." Individual characteristics of public relations professionals are another critical element to success or failure of public relations activities. In addition to the external variables, the variables to influence public relations practice within organizational boundaries are suggested by Cameron, Cropp and Reber (2001): (1) organization's characteristics; (2) public relations department characteristics; (3) characteristics of top management; (4) internal threats; (5) individual characteristics; and (6) relationship characteristics.

Organizational characteristics are a main predisposing point to describe public relations practice in an organization. Public relations functions are often described by an organization's characteristics under the organization's umbrella: geographical location, business product or service, the level of technology, number of rules defining the job descriptions, homogeneity or heterogeneity of employees, values placed on tradition, speed of growth in the knowledge level and economic stability of the organization (Judd, 1987; Cameron, Cropp, & Reber, 2001). Organizational characteristics essentially involve an organizational culture, which is defined as the organization's structure, philosophy, policies, business environment, goals, internal politics, history and image (Cameron, & McCollum, 1993; Cline, 1988; Deal & Kennedy, 1982).

As public relations has become one of the most important activities practiced in various types of organizations, the different characteristics of various types of organizations need to be examined in the domain of public relations practice. Many governmental units, state enterprises, corporations and non-profit organizations carry out some kinds of public relations activities on a global scale (Ekachai, 1995). The scope or range of public relations in organizational settings is a function of how the organization structures or organizes all of its departments or units. If organized by public or market rather than by task or function, there is a greater chance for overlap between public relations, marketing, human resources, and other departments (Leuven, 1991). The organizational types are a major component for the subsystems to influence the functions of public relations.

The public relations department's characteristics in an organization describe more specific roles of public relations practitioners. The position of the public relations department in an organization determines public relations functions. Furthermore, the public relations department's representation in the dominant coalition and its autonomy are significant factors in determining how an organization practices public relations (Pollack, 1986). "The public relations department offices being physically located near the CEO's office" and "public relations not being under the marketing umbrella" are critical to public relations activities and its outcomes (Sallot, Cameron, & Lariscy, 1999). In spite of the importance of the public relations department's representation in the dominant coalition, the respondents in a national survey of public relations educators viewed "location of public relations on the organizational chart and inclusion of public relations in the dominant coalition as most lacking in a standard of professional performance" (Sallot, Cameron, & Lariscy, 1998, p.33).

Also related to public relations performance in an organization is the distribution of decision-making power and hierarchy of positions (Cancel, Mitrook, & Cameron, 1997). Grunig and Hunt (1984) stated that although a public relations manager plays an important role in determining the predominant public relations model in the public relations activities. He or she only supports the upper level of management of his or her organization without decision-making power. Dozier and Broom (1985) found that possessing a predominant manager role enactment is positively related to participation in management decision-making through a comparison of public relations manager role enactment in 1979 and 1991. Cameron et al. (1994) suggested constraints related to the roles of public relations practitioners in public relations practice. In the manager role, participation in the decision-making process is constrained. Public relations practitioners employed within organizations must practice public relations activities under the restraints forced by management.

Accordingly, the management is a part of the dominant coalition, which is an influential group of constituencies of the organization (Thompson, 1967). It is important to identify the top management with a dominant coalition in public relations activities because their political values, management style and understanding of public relations is directly influencing pubic relations practitioners and their activities (Cameron, Sallot, & Lariscy, 1996; Sallot, Cameron, & Lariscy, 1997). According to Pennings and Goodman (1983), an organization or the management would value public relations functions when the public relations department and external publics become a part of the dominant coalition. Lauzen (1995) suggested that practitioners' participation in issues management is related to how public relations practitioners become a dominant coalition by acquiring the intra organizational power.

In today's rapidly changing social, political and economic environment, top managers need the services of public relations in order to be attentive to the public, deal with the public and take an action on issues. Public relations practitioners have an advantageous opportunity to help an organization's management realize these objectives (Wilcox et al., 2001). To assist the management function by minimizing the potential harm or maximize the possible benefit, public relations practitioners should consider the internal threats: economic loss or gain from implementing various stances and marring employees' or stockholders' perception of the organization (Cameron, Cropp, & Reber, 2001). Cutlip, Center, and Broom (1994) stated, "no organizational relationships are as important as those with employees." Seitel (1992) also noted, "the first step in promoting positive external public relations is achieving good internal public relations."

Stockholders are another important internal constituency because they influence the organizational process. (Hillman & Keim, 2001).

More fundamentally, individual public relations practitioners and their qualifications are important in public relations activities since they provide management with individual qualities or capabilities. Assignments to such areas as marketing or management will provide public relations professionals with new perspectives for the management function and give it added credibility (Barstow, 1984). Koten (1986) also suggested that public relations professionals need to broaden the public relations domain by including skills in the areas of negotiation, business and management. A professional development plan should be implemented to increase the skills of public relations practitioners (Dozier & Broom, 1995). Cameron et al. (2001) expanded the qualifications of public relations practitioners to include type of past training, training in public relations, marketing, journalism, engineering, etc., training in research methods, communication competency, experience level in dealing with conflict, ability to recognize and handle potential and existing problems, comfort level with conflict or change, predisposition toward negotiation or altruism, world-views, personality, and personal ethics.

An increasing number of scholars are adopting the perspective that public relations should be viewed as the management of a relationship between organizations and publics (Ehling, 1992; Lendingham & Bruning, 2000). Grunig and Grunig (1992) emphasizes "the importance of linking organization-public relationship evaluation to organizational goals of these organizations by building long-term behavioral relationships with strategic publics" (p. 11). They argued that the crucial symmetrical concepts that can help to facilitate the organization-public relationship involve creating "a sense of openness, trust, and understanding between the organization and the key public," as well as "a willingness to negotiate, collaborate, and mediate solutions to issues of concern to both the organization and critical publics" (p. 285). Cameron, et. al. (2001; 2002) claimed that the dynamic continuum of organization-public relationship, based on a level of trust, dependency of parties and ideological barriers between an organization and a public, is a logical explication of what public relations is. They argued that the practice of public relations is too complex and impinged upon by too many variables for the public-organization's relationship to be unrelentingly symmetrical.

The previous studies suggested that internal factors are influential to public relations activities within the scope of an organization. The internal factors are fundamentally defining the public relations activities by being associated with, or distinguished from, the external factors. Considering the fundamental impact of internal variables on public relations, it is necessary to identify the degree of influence of a number of internal variables and to compare them to the level of external variables. In this study, a number of internal constraints, i.e. the organization's characteristics, public relations department characteristics, characteristics of top management, internal threats, individual characteristics, and relationship characteristics were examined to test the validity of multiple factors that influence public relations practice on different levels. In particular, this study attempts to identify dominating variables that influence public relations practice within and outside an organization.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims at examining what matters most in public relations and identifying what factors public relations practitioners perceive as influential to public relations practice. Much has been written about what public relations "should be," but little is known about how it "is." Although there is now a great deal of discussion in the variability of public relations practice, little attention has been given to the way the public-organization relationship can be associated with a number of contingent factors. Based on previous studies of the contingent factors (Cameron et al., 1997; 1999; 2001; 2002), this study had public relations practitioners to evaluate the factors that influence their public relations practice. It also had public relations practitioners assess if the normative rules of the excellence study (Grunig, 1989; 2000) are being applied to the practice.

RQ1. Do public relations practitioners evaluate the contingent factors as influential to public relations activities?

RQ2. Do public relations practitioners evaluate the normative rules as being applied to the practice?

RQ3. What factors do public relations practitioners evaluate as influential to public relations activities?

RQ3a. What factors are associated to dominantly influence public relations practice?

RQ3b. What factors are discriminated to distinctively influence public relations practice?

METHODS

A random sample of public relations practitioners were surveyed regarding a number of contingent variables that influence public relations practice in the U.S. In order to examine the factors that public relations practitioners perceive as influential to their activities, an e-mail survey and follow-up e-mail surveys to collect completed the survey were conducted among public relations practitioners. A sample of 800 public relations practitioners with a margin of error of approximately two percent was randomly drawn from the directory of PRSA Blue Book (2000). PRSA was established to improve standards and professionalism in public relations and create the accreditation programs, and overall, the members are expected to have a high level of experience, competence and ethical conduct. The sample consisted of randomly selected public relations practitioners working at agencies, corporations, non-profit organizations and government organizations.

The questionnaire was based on the contingent factors suggested to influence public relations practice (Cameron, Cropp, & Reber, 2001) and the generic rules suggested in the normative public relations (Grunig & Grunig, 1992). From the previous studies, 86 contingent variables that influence public relations activities within and out of organization were identified. The external variables include variable categories from threats, industry environment, political/social/cultural environment, the external publics, and the issue under question. The internal variables include variable categories from organization's characteristics, public relations department characteristics, top management characteristics, internal threats, individual characteristics, and relationship characteristics.

Also, this study includes some questions related to the generic rules of the normative models by asking public relations professionals (1) if public relations practitioners play an important role in the relationship between an organization and its key publics; (2) if the goal of public relations activities is to enhance mutual understanding between an organization and its key publics; (3) if an organization should always release all information, even that is negatively involved in the organization's status; (4) The organization "they work for" always releases all information, even that is negatively involved in the organization's status; (5) if an organization should consider accepting its public's position in the conflict situation with the public; (6) if the organization "they work for" considers accepting its public's position in the conflict situation with the public; (7) An organization should value more the ethics of public relations activities; and (8) The organization "they work for" value more the ethics of public relations activities. Questions (4), (6) and (8) involve in an organization's actual practice, which can be compared to the normative sense of public relations practitioners reflected in questions (3), (5) and (7).

The survey asked respondents to assess the degree of "influence" with 86 contingent factors on a 5-point Likert-type scale, where 1 was "not influential" and 5 was "very influential." The questionnaire was transmitted via e-mail in the U.S. in November 2001. A follow-up reminder to respond was transmitted via e-mail in December 2001. If requested, the questionnaire also was sent by mail. The survey yielded 124 total usable responses for an 16 percent return rate.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics

Questions were included to determine the respondent's age, gender, education, major, title, years of experience, organization and program. The subjects were public relations practitioners in the United States. Of the professionals participating in the survey, 29 percent were age 30-39 (N=36); 28.2 percent were 40-49 (N=35); 21 percent were less than 30 (N=26); 14.6 percent were 50-59 (N=21); and 4.2 percent more than 50 (N=6). About a half of the professionals were male (N=64), and another half were female (N= 60).

Some 38.2 percent of the professionals possessed bachelor degrees (N=55); 22.9 percent have acquired master's degree (N=33); 9.1 percent possessed a doctoral degree (N=13); 8.3 percent were high school graduates (N=12); and 7.6 percent have acquired some college degree (N=11). About a half majored in journalism (N=51); 10.4 percent in public relations (N=15); 6.3 percent in business or marketing (N=9); 4.2 percent in advertising (N=6); and 29.9 percent in English, speech communication, etc. (N=43).

Some 55.6 percent of the respondents held managerial positions (N=80), while 30.6 percent had staff level posts (N=44). Almost one-third reported practicing public relations for 1-5 years (N=38); about a quarter 6-10 years (N=24); another quarter 11-20 years (N=25); and the rest for more than 20 years (N=30). Some 28.5 percent of public relations practitioners reported being affiliated with agencies (N=41); 18.1 percent worked for non-profit organizations (N=26); 17.4 percent worked for corporation (N=25); 9 percent worked for government (N=13); 9 percent worked for private organizations (N=13); and the rest with others (N=6). Some 41 percent of the public relations practitioners surveyed reported that the organization they work for focuses on media relations in public relations activities (N=59); while 7.6 percent of the respondents reported community relations as a main public relations activity (N=11); 6.3 percent responded consumer relations (N=9); 6.3 percent reported investor relations (N=13); 5.6 percent government relations (N=8); 2.1 percent indicated interest group relations (N=3); and 17.4 percent others (N=25).

Descriptive Statistics

The results indicated that all the contingent factors are influential to public relations practitioners' activities ranging from the mean value of 3.5 (public relations practitioner gender) to the mean value of 4.4 (top management's support of public relations). Notably, public relations practitioners reported most organizational factors as the dominating influences on public relations practice. Four out of five factors with the mean value above 4.3 were related to organizational factors: top management's support and understanding of PR (Mean=4.4), top management's frequency of external contact (Mean=4.3), representation in top management (Mean=4.3), scarring organization's reputation (Mean=4.3) and marring of stockholders' perception of the company (Mean=4.3). Interestingly, top management was perceived as greatly influential to public relations practice, and in turn, organization's management played an important role in public relations practice as a dominant coalition. Overall, this finding indicates that organizational management is most importantly involved in the success or failure of public relations activities.

Insert Table 1 about here

Another interesting finding regarding the question of whether public relations practitioners play an important role in the relationship between an organization and its key publics is that almost all of the respondents reported "no (N=56)." Also, regarding the question of whether the goal of public relations activities is to enhance mutual understanding between an organization and its key publics, almost all of the respondents reported "no (N=57)."

Furthermore, it is remarkable that regarding the question of whether the organization should always release all information, even if it negatively impacts the organization, 82.3 percent of the public relations practitioners surveyed reported "no (N=84)," suggesting withholding the negative information of an organization would be a sound strategy. The tendency is similarly evident when it is involved in the organization they work for: 92 percent of the respondents indicated that the organization "they work for" does not release information that negatively impacts the organization (N=81). Regarding the conflict situation with the public, nearly three quarters (70.5 percent) of the public relations practitioners surveyed indicated that public relations activities of an organization should not consider accepting its public's position (N=75). Some 67.6 percent of the respondents also reported that the organization "they work for" does not consider accepting its public's position in the conflict situation with the public (N=69). And, 77.5 percent of the public relations practitioners surveyed responded that an organization should not value more the ethics of public relations activities (N=79). Some 77.5 percent of the respondents reported that the organization "they work for" does not value more the ethics of public relations activities.

Insert Table 2 about here

Correlations among Contingent Factors

All of the contingent factors are correlated with one another, suggesting that they are influential to public relations practice directly or indirectly. Among the relationships, threats are highly correlated with political/social/cultural environment (r=0.564) and external publics (r=0.506); industry environment is highly correlated with issue under questions (r=0.540) and internal threats (r=0.531); political/social/cultural environment is well correlated with external publics (r=0.550); organization's characteristics are well correlated with PR department characteristics (r=0.508); PR department characteristics are very highly correlated with management characteristics (r=0.640); and individual characteristics are highly correlated with relationship characteristics (r=0.570). Overall, these findings suggest that the external factors are well associated with one another (i.e. threats, political/social/cultural environment, external publics, etc.) whereas the internal factors are associated with one another (organization's characteristics, PR department characteristics, management characteristics).

It is notable that industry environment, as one of the external categories, is associated with internal threats as one of the internal categories. Also, PR department characteristics are not associated with threats, industry environment, and political/social/ management characteristics at all, which suggests that PR department characteristics are not defined by external factors, but may be influenced by internal factors such as management characteristics. This result is supported by the finding that an organization's characteristics, PR department characteristics and management characteristics are not correlated with external threats at all.

Insert Table 3 about here

Discriminant Functions in Contingent Factors

Discriminant function analysis was employed to identify the contingent factors that best identify public relations practitioners in terms of "working positions." This analysis enabled simultaneous evaluation of a battery of contingent factors, adjusting for Type 1 error resulting when numerous significance tests are made. Since management's support and understanding of public relations is particularly influential to public relations activities (Mean =4.4), "working positions" was employed to discriminate a number of contingent factors.

Table 4 serves to identify the variables on the working position dimension, which discriminates the management level of public relations practitioners and staff level of public relations practitioners, and indicates high values in the group membership prediction with two functions (Function 1: Canonical correlation=0.982, Wilks' Lamda=0.006, Chi-square=86.413, p=0.001; Function 2: Canonical correlation=0.908, Wilks' Lamda= 0.176, Chi-square=29.535, p=0.021). Some 76.1 percent of original grouped cases were correctly classified (84.4 percent of management level public relations practitioners and 60 percent of staff level public relations practitioners) and accounted for by the two functions.

The variables appearing on Function 1 are significantly related to the contingent factors on an individual level (i.e. PR practitioners' personality, PR practitioners' personal ethics, PR practitioners' extent to grasp others' world-views, PR practitioners' training in PR, PR practitioners' ability to recognize problems, PR practitioners' comfort level with change, etc.). On the other hand, the variables appearing on Function 2 show a mixed pattern negatively related to the contingent factors on both organizational and societal levels (i.e. issue complexity, public's willingness to dilute, political support of business, homogeneity of employees, physical placement of PR department, level of communication, level of media coverage, level of technology by organization, etc.). These results suggest that management level public relations practitioners can be accounted for by the contingent factors on an individual level, and staff level public relations practitioners can be accounted for by the contingent factors related to organizational or social levels.

A two dimensional depiction of how the variables work to differentiate managing level public relations practitioners and staff level public relations is presented in Figure 1. The discriminant function centroids to differentiate management level public relations practitioners, and staff level public relations practitioners are distributed along Function 1 but less so along Function 2. The managing level professionals tend toward positive values on Function 1, while the staff level professionals tend in the opposite direction along the dimension (Group centroids: managing level public relations practitioners, 1.686: staff level public relations practitioners, -15.480). However, the managing level professionals tend toward negative values on Function 2, while the staff level professionals tend toward more negative values along the dimension (Group centroids: managing level public relations practitioners, -1.084: staff level public relations practitioners, -0.203). Function 2 is less effective in separating the management level professionals and staff level professionals than Function 1. The results show that management level practitioners tend to perceive that their activities are influenced by individual characteristics or qualifications, where as staff level practitioners are not likely to perceive that they are not directly influenced by organizational characteristics or societal environment.

Insert Table 4 about here

Insert Figure 1 about here

Table 5 serves to identify the variables on organizational types, which discriminate agency group, corporation group, non-profit organization group and government group, and indicate a high value in the group membership prediction (Function 1: Canonical correlation=0.993, Wilks' Lamda=0.000, Chi-square=174.519 , p=0.000; Function 2: Canonical correlation=0.972, Wilks' Lamda= 0.001, Chi-square=105.393, p=0.006). Some 74.4 percent of original grouped cases were correctly classified (75 percent of agency group, 70 percent of corporation group, 100 percent of non-profit organization group and 66.7 percent of government group) and accounted for by the two functions.

The variables appearing on Function 1 show the mixed pattern related to the contingent factors on organizational level: Some organizational level factors (i.e. speed of organization's knowledge, homogeneity of employees, age of organization, autonomy of PR department, etc.) show positive values, but some others (communication competency of PR department, corporate culture, hierarchy of positions, top management's support of PR department, etc.) suggest negative values. Also, most variables appearing on Function 2 are negatively related to organizational level factors (i.e. physical placement of PR department, level of technology by organization, geographical dispersion, distribution of decision-making power, PR department's amount of funding, organization's experience with public, etc.). The results suggest that "organizational types" can be accounted for by the contingent factors on organizational levels, and particularly by the PR department or top management related factors on an organizational level.

A two dimensional depiction of how the variables work to differentiate agency group, corporation group, non-profit organization group and government group is presented in Figure 2. The discriminant function centroids to differentiate corporation and government groups from agency and non-profit organization groups are distributed along Function 1. The corporation and government groups tend toward negative values on Function 1, while agency and non-profit organization groups tend in the opposite direction along the dimension (Group centroids: corporation: -13.795: government, -7.751: agency, 4.559: non-profit organization, 4.822). On the other hand, non-profit organization and government groups tend toward negative values on Function 2, while agency and corporation groups tend in the opposite direction along the dimension (Group centroids: government, -12.525: non-profit organization, -3.798: corporation, 2.336: agency, 1.954). Overall, the results show that public relations practice in the government group is likely to be influenced by organizational factors, particularly the PR department or top management related factors on an organizational level, while the practice in agencies tends to be less influenced by organizational factors. Considering that government organizations have a more rule governed hierarchy, the public relations practice may be more influenced by the top management or the autonomy of the PR department may be more important than agencies. On the other hand, public relations practitioners in agencies work for their clients mostly outside the organization, and therefore, the top management or the power of the PR department may be less critical in their activities.

Insert Table 5 about here

Insert Figure 2 about here

DISCUSSION

This study was developed to ask what matters most in public relations. The results showed that while all 86 contingent factors in the Contingency Theory of Accommodation in Public Relations (Cameron et al., 1997; 1999; 2001; 2002). influence their practice, the organizational level factors are most influential. This finding suggests that public relations is contingent in nature, depending on various factors. Public relations practitioners even do not believe the normative principles in public relations practice. They indicated that what they believe as the norm of public relations is not being applied in actual practice. And they do not believe that they should practice normative rules. Rather, they pointed out that various contingent factors constrain public relations practice within the scope of an organization. This suggests that an adequate public relations theory will have a developmental component built into the contingency model.

Interestingly, the dominating factors public relations practitioners assess as influential to their activities are related to organizational level factors, i.e. top management's support and understanding of PR, top management's frequency of external contact, representation in top management, scarring organization's reputation and marring of stockholders' perception of the company, etc. It is possible that organizational factors are assessed as dominantly influential to public relations practice since public relations is a distinctive management function (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994; Grunig et al., 2001: Cameron et al., 2001). The bottom line for public relations must always be what is in the scope of the organization that imposes the inherent roles for the organization (Shin & Cameron, 2002).

It is even more interesting that the contingent factors are associated with one another, suggesting that they may be influential to public relations practice even indirectly by affecting other factors in real practice. Also, the external factors are highly significantly associated with one another just like the internal factors are significantly correlated: Threats are significantly correlated with political/social/cultural environment and external publics, whereas an organization's characteristics are associated with PR department characteristics, management characteristics. Further, whereas PR department characteristics are not correlated with threats, industry environment and political/social/ management characteristics, an organization's characteristics, PR department characteristics or management characteristics are not associated with external threats. This implies that PR department characteristics are not defined by external factors, but may be influenced by internal factors such as management characteristics.

These findings also were supported by the different assessment between management level practitioners and staff level practitioners regarding the influence of the contingent factors.. Distinguishing factors by the function of "working positions" appears to provide a useful reduction of the contingent factors that influence public relations activities. It is notable that the function of "working positions" discriminates the managing level practitioners and staff level practitioners mostly with organizational factors. While management level practitioners evaluate highly the influence of individual factors on public relations practice as well as organizational factors, staff level practitioners mostly evaluate the organizational factors as influential to the practice.

Organizational management is evaluated particularly as the dominant coalition to influence public relations activities by staff level practitioners more than by management level practitioners. This suggests that public relations is a managerial function, but rather influenced by a higher management in the scope of an organization. The managerial role enactment or entitlement has been discussed by many scholars: Public relations practitioners want to be involved in the communication process within an organization and empowered with managerial roles (Broom & Dozier, 1986; Cameron & McCollum, 1993).

Also, distinguishing factors by the function of "organizational types" discriminate agencies, corporations, non-profit organizations and government, particularly with management related factors. An organizational management may be most influential constituencies to public relations activities (Thompson, 1967). Public relations practitioners even tend to perceive the norms of their top management as higher than their own (Pratt, 1991). The "umbrella" notion of public relations under the management function may provide a possible explanation for the profession's inherent state.

The findings detailed here indicate that the state of public relations is more a consequence of practitioners' perfunctory adherence to top management related to organizational types. Government is a distinguished organization in that it is more influenced by the top management related factors than other organizational types. Agencies are another distinguished organization since they are less influenced by the top management related factors than other organizational types. Guth (2000) pointed out that the problem with government public relations has less to do with practitioners and more to do with the top management. There is a sense that the role of the public relations function within an organization may be operated under top management's decision making power more in government than in any other types of organizations. Conversely, public relations practitioners in agencies may play a client-centered function by serving their clients. Toth et al. (1998) suggested that an agency role emerged in 1995 in addition to the manager and technician roles found in 1990, indicating the cross-over role profile of public relations practitioners.

As illustrated earlier, public relations activities are contingent on a variety of factors on individual, organizational and societal levels. In this study, most organizational level factors were assessed as influential to public relations activities, signaling that public relations practice is under the umbrella of an organization. Particularly, management related factors were significantly evaluated as dominant in public relations practice, suggesting that management enactment can make a difference in successes or failures of public relations practice within an organization. The main topic of public relations within the scope of an organization may depend on how individual public relations practitioners are empowered to practice within their own autonomy. Individual public relations practitioners should conduct their professional lives in accord with their organization as a whole (Shin & Cameron, 2002).

This study suggests practical and theoretical implications to public relations practitioners by providing the contingency model with the validity of the variables in both theory and practice. Public relations practitioners should understand the opportunities and challenges of public relations practice by identifying what constraints they have in their activities and recognizing that management enactment or empowerment may reduce the constraints and increase the scope of professional activities. Public relations profession may need to revolve around the linking of internal and external demands "with or for" management enactment or entitlement.

Also, this study is a theoretical test of the contingency theory in public relations—how a number of factors play a dominant role in public relations activities by being associated with or discriminated from one another. Public relations is constrained under the management within an organization, and it is dominantly contingent on characteristics of an organization, PR department and top management. This has important implications for the public relations field seeking identity. , However, these findings require further research to legitimize how exactly either internal or external contingency variables associate or dissociate with each other to influence public relations on different levels, and to specify how organizational types and management enactment are linked to public relations within an organization. A series of studies should be conducted in an attempt to replicate the dominance of organizational factors in public relations; and explicate the power differences between internal and external variables to influence public relations activities. This would help develop a more comprehensive public relations theory and general theory of the contingency model.

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APPENDIX

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Contingent Factors (N=124)

Contingent Factors	*Mean*
top management's support of public relations	4.4
top management's frequency of external contact	4.3
representation in top management	4.3
scarring organization's reputation	4.3
marring of stockholders' perception of the company	4.3
culture of organization	4.2
PR department's amount of funding	4.2
PR practitioners' familiarity	4.2
level of trust	4.2
organization's experience with public	4.2
issue stakes	4.2
PR practitioners' ability to recognize problems	4.2
level of media coverage	4.2
existence of legal department on PR	4.2
PR practitioners' communication	4.2
PR department's perception of external environment	4.2
PR practitioners' complex problems	4.2
top management calculating potential rewards	4.2
economic loss from implementing various stance	4.2
PR department's amount of time	4.2
damaging publicity	4.2
PR practitioners' extent of openness	4.2
corporate culture	4.2
distribution of decision-making power	4.2
marring of the personal reputation of the decision-makers	4.1
economic stability of organization	4.1
relative power of public	4.1
communication competency of pr department	4.1
ideological barriers	4.1
management style	4.1
past successes of public	4.1
issue size	4.1
relative power of organization	4.1
business mix	4.1
PR practitioners' extent to grasp others' world-views	4.1
PR practitioners' comfort level with change	4.1
general altruism of top management	4.1
location of pr department in hierarchy	4.1
litigation	4.1
government regulation	4.1
changing industry environment	4.1
PR practitioners' use of information	4.1
line manger's involvement	4.1
size of external public	4.1

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PR practitioners' comfort level with conflict	4.1
autonomy of pr department	4.1
representatives of public knowing the organization's representatives	4.1
dependence of parties	4.1
speed of organization's knowledge	4.1
amount of advocacy	4.1
moves or countermoves	4.1
experience of pr dealing with conflict	4.1
PR practitioners' liking external representatives	4.1
level of technology by organization	4.0
PR practitioners' personal ethics	4.0
issue complexity	4.0
PR practitioners' negotiation	4.0
community's perception of public	4.0
social support of business	4.0
geographical dispersion	4.0
level of communication	4.0
political support of business	4.0
degree of powerful members	4.0
richness of industry resources	4.0
PR practitioners' training in pr	4.0
PR practitioners' tolerance of dealing with uncertainty	4.0
representatives of organization knowing the public's representatives	4.0
PR practitioners' personality	4.0
hierarchy of positions	4.0
PR practitioners' altruism	4.0
number of industry competitors	4.0
PR department's potential to practice various models	4.0
political value of top management	3.9
legitimizing activists	3.9
type of past training of employees	3.9
public's willingness to dilute	3.9
existence of issue management personnel	3.9
physical placement of pr department	3.8
age of organization	3.8
homogeneity of employees	3.8
public relations practitioner with college degrees	3.8
public relations staff in research	3.8
public having public relations counselors	3.7
number of rules defining the job descriptions	3.7
percentage of female upper-level	3.6
public relations gender	3.5

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Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Generic Rules of Excellence Models (N=124)

Excellence	*Yes*	*No*
Public practitioners play an important role in the relationship between an organization and its key publics	5	56
The goal of public relation activities is to enhance mutual understanding between an organization and its key publics	4	57
An organization should always release all information, even that is negatively involved in the organization's status	18	84
The organization "you work for" always releases all information, even that is negatively involved in the organization's status	21	81
An organization should consider accepting its public's position in the conflict situation with the public	27	75
The organization "you work for" considers accepting its public's position in the conflict situation with the public	33	69
An organization should value more the ethics of public relations activities	23	79
The organization "you work for" value more the ethics of public relations activities	23	79

Table 3

Correlations of Contingent Factors (N=124)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1 Threats	1	.205	.564**	.506**	.275**	.188	.191	.168	.454**	.277*	.289*
2 Industry Environment		1	.313**	.419**	.540**	.353**	.091	.210*	.531**	.197	.308**
3 Political/Social/Cultural Environment	-	-	1	.550**	.186	.311**	.173	.247*	.314**	.256*	.230*
4 External Publics	-	-	-	1	.502**	.378**	.309**	.405**	.308**	.309**	.311**
5 Issue Under Question	-	-	-	-	1	.454**	.296**	.465**	.465**	.422**	.468**
6 Organization's Characteristics	-	-	-	-	-	1	.508**	.467**	.465**	.393**	.421**
7 PR Department Characteristics	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	.640**	.225*	.481**	.324**
8 Management Characteristics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	.323**	.485**	.417**
9 Internal Threats	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	.293**	.385**
10 Individual Characteristics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	.570**
11 Relationship Characteristics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Notes: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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Table 4

Correlations of Significant Function of "Working Positions" and Discriminating Variables (N=124)

Contingent Factors	*Function1*	*Function2*
PR practitioners' personality	.106*	-.017
marring of the personal reputation of the decision-makers	.096*	-.029
level of trust	.093*	-.036
ideological barriers	.092*	-.037
PR practitioners' personal ethics	.090*	-.052
PR department's perception of external environment	.087*	-.015
PR practitioners' extent to grasp others' world-views	.086*	-.029
PR practitioners' training in PR	.083*	-.019
economic loss from implementing various stance	.082*	-.005
PR practitioners' ability to recognize problems	.082*	-.013
PR practitioners' comfort level with change	.081*	-.017
dependence of parties	.077*	-.039
PR practitioners' complex problems	.077*	-.044
PR gender	.075*	-.040
PR practitioner with college degrees	.074*	.047
PR practitioners' extent of openness	.072*	-.042
PR practitioners' communication	.072*	-.004
PR practitioners' altruism	.070*	-.060
PR practitioners' negotiation	.068*	-.030
location of PR department in hierarchy	.066*	.001
line manger's involvement	.065*	-.026
PR practitioners' comfort level with conflict	.065*	-.021
top management calculating potential rewards	.062*	-.007
PR practitioners' tolerance of dealing with uncertainty	.062*	-.035
political value of top management	.058*	-.040
PR practitioners' use of information	.058*	-.039
PR staff in research	.057*	-.013
litigation	-.055*	-.010
age of organization	.054*	.024
general altruism of top management	.052*	-.003
management style	.052*	-.017
existence of issue management personnel	-.049*	-.017
government regulation	-.048*	-.015
PR practitioners like external representatives	.047*	-.045
social support of business	-.046*	.025
experience of PR practitioners' dealing with conflict	.044*	-.038
geographical dispersion	-.043*	-.029
degree of powerful members	-.043*	-.011
changing industry environment	-.043*	-.007
past successes of public	-.042*	-.017
amount of advocacy	-.041*	-.001
damaging publicity	-.040*	-.025

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scarring organization's reputation	-.038*	-.003
speed of organization's knowledge	.037*	.004
business mix	.034*	-.005
autonomy of PR department	.030*	-.019
PR department's amount of time	.029*	-.005
size of external public	-.028*	.005
top management's frequency of external contact	.026*	-.016
type of past training of employees	.026*	-.001
corporate culture	-.025*	.002
economic stability of organization	-.024*	-.009
top management's support of PR	.021*	-.011
legitimizing activists	-.017*	-.004
existence of legal department on PR	-.012*	-.009
issue complexity	-.080	-.127*
number of industry competitors	-.025	.127*
issue stakes	-.023	-.113*
public's willingness to dilute	-.005	-.111*
political support of business	-.042	-.104*
homogeneity of employees	.062	-.099*
physical placement of PR department	.030	-.096*
level of communication	-.005	-.084*
PR practitioners' familiarity	.056	-.073*
level of media coverage	-.014	-.073*
level of technology by organization	-.038	-.070*
percentage of female upper-level	.059	-.069*
moves or countermoves	-.002	-.068*
number of rules defining the job descriptions	.016	-.067*
communication competency of PR department	.001	-.061*
marring of stockholders' perception of the company	.053	-.058*
richness of industry resources	-.013	.050*
issue size	.000	-.045*
public having PR counselors	.020	.041*
PR department's potential to practice various models	.020	-.040*
relative power of organization	-.029	-.038*
culture of organization	.011	.037*
representatives of public's knowing the organization's representatives	-.010	.037*
distribution of decision-making power	-.025	-.036*
representatives of organization's knowing the public's representatives	-.010	.036*
community's perception of public	-.004	-.034*
relative power of public	.001	-.034*
hierarchy of positions	-.004	.030*
organization's experience with public	-.005	-.029*
PR department's amount of funding	.006	-.019*
representation in top management	.000	-.002*

Notes: Pooled within-groups correlations between discriminating variables and standardized canonical discriminant functions; Variables ordered by absolute size of correlation within function.

* Largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function.

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Table 5

Correlations of Significant Function of "Organizational Type" and Discriminating Variables (N=124)

Contingent Factors	*Function*			
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*
speed of organization's knowledge	.158*	-.053	.065	.076
homogeneity of employees	.146*	-.112	.098	.066
communication competency of PR department	-.124*	-.036	.043	.036
corporate culture	-.113*	-.007	.007	.032
hierarchy of positions	-.107*	.028	-.010	-.002
age of organization	.104*	-.075	.032	.039
PR practitioner with college degrees	.104*	-.010	.043	.035
issue stakes	.100*	-.081	.066	.083
top management's support of PR	-.073*	-.010	.042	.021
autonomy of PR department	.072*	-.053	.060	.056
PR practitioners' personality	.071*	-.007	.036	.046
PR practitioners' tolerance of dealing with uncertainty	.068*	-.059	.042	.024
business mix	-.063*	.013	.051	-.004
existence of legal department on PR	-.042*	-.040	.031	-.002
PR practitioners' comfort level with change	.039*	-.017	.032	.021
PR practitioners' ability to recognize problems	.030*	.015	.017	.028
issue complexity	.113	-.196*	.059	.112
physical placement of PR department	.038	-.132*	.046	.131
percentage of female upper-level	-.022	-.131*	.068	.074
level of technology by organization	.011	-.112*	-.003	.075
geographical dispersion	.042	-.104*	.030	.049
distribution of decision-making power	-.054	-.098*	.039	.025
PR department's amount of funding	-.013	-.093*	.062	.035
organization's experience with public	-.065	-.089*	.062	.023
PR practitioners' altruism	.060	-.086*	.058	.031
degree of powerful members	-.013	-.077*	-.038	-.019
PR practitioners' training in PR	.059	-.077*	.050	.051
size of external public	-.017	-.071*	-.029	-.063
PR practitioners' personal ethics	.027	-.070*	.066	.024
economic stability of organization	.011	-.070*	.025	.025
relative power of public	.014	-.068*	-.012	-.013
legitimizing activists	-.016	-.065*	.019	.024
number of industry competitors	-.004	.063*	-.061	-.032
representatives of public knowing the organization's representatives	-.014	-.060*	-.023	.051
relative power of organization	-.013	-.054*	-.028	-.002
scarring organization's reputation	-.045	-.051*	-.008	-.042
PR practitioners' liking external representatives	.002	-.051*	.043	.048
representatives of organization knowing the public's representatives	-.002	-.044*	-.042	-.006
PR practitioners' complex problems	.034	-.043*	.042	.032
past successes of public	-.020	-.036*	-.017	.033
amount of advocacy	-.011	-.032*	.005	-.022
top management calculating potential rewards	.017	-.039	.107*	.043

PR department's amount of time	.043	-.077	.100*	.021
PR department's perception of external environment	.070	-.033	.095*	.013
experience of PR dealing with conflict	-.016	-.060	.088*	.021
richness of industry resources	.019	-.007	-.087*	-.029
marring of stockholders' perception of the company	.008	-.040	.081*	.074
political value of top management	-.073	-.051	.076*	.025
economic loss from implementing various stance	.050	.000	.076*	.013
ideological barriers	.017	-.021	.073*	.050
representation in top management	.005	-.051	.069*	.036
level of trust	.015	-.020	.063*	.035
PR practitioners' familiarity	.022	-.056	.061*	.055
line manger's involvement	.016	-.045	.058*	.030
dependence of parties	.010	-.021	.057*	.043
PR department's potential to practice various models	-.032	-.047	.054*	.050
PR practitioners' negotiation	.030	-.041	.052*	.029
PR practitioners' extent to grasp others' world-views	.034	-.039	.052*	.045
top management's frequency of external contact	-.044	-.033	.051*	.035
location of PR department in hierarchy	.020	-.024	.047*	.038
PR practitioners' comfort level with conflict	.029	-.024	.034*	.028
marring of the personal reputation of the decision-makers	-.002	-.009	.028*	.027
public's willingness to dilute	-.017	-.073	.022	.198*
community's perception of public	.001	-.018	.013	.139*
issue size	.043	-.054	.019	.118*
PR gender	.066	-.060	.038	.114*
public having PR counsellors	.013	-.008	-.043	.112*
number of rules defining the job descriptions	.066	-.075	.046	.112*
moves or countermoves	-.003	-.019	.001	.108*
government regulation	-.033	-.015	.031	-.107*
level of media coverage	-.016	-.033	.004	.098*
social support of business	-.006	-.003	-.008	-.082*
existence of issue management personnel	-.004	-.059	.034	.081*
litigation	-.009	.024	-.005	-.073*
damaging publicity	-.060	-.060	-.039	-.072*
PR staff in research	.028	-.040	.068	.070*
management style	-.004	-.019	.029	.069*
level of communication	-.004	-.050	-.002	.065*
general altruism of top management	-.048	-.033	.046	.065*
type of past training of employees	-.027	-.027	.036	.059*
PR practitioners' use of information	-.015	-.037	.030	.047*
political support of business	-.012	.005	-.001	-.046*
changing industry environment	-.003	-.024	.005	.043*
PR practitioners' extent of openness	.000	-.011	.021	.042*
culture of organization	.001	-.019	.004	.032*
PR practitioners' communication	.004	.012	-.002	.016*

Notes: Pooled within-groups correlations between discriminating variables and standardized canonical discriminant functions; Variables ordered by absolute size of correlation within function.

* Largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function

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Figure 1

Canonical Discriminat Function Centroids of "Working Positions" in Discriminant Space

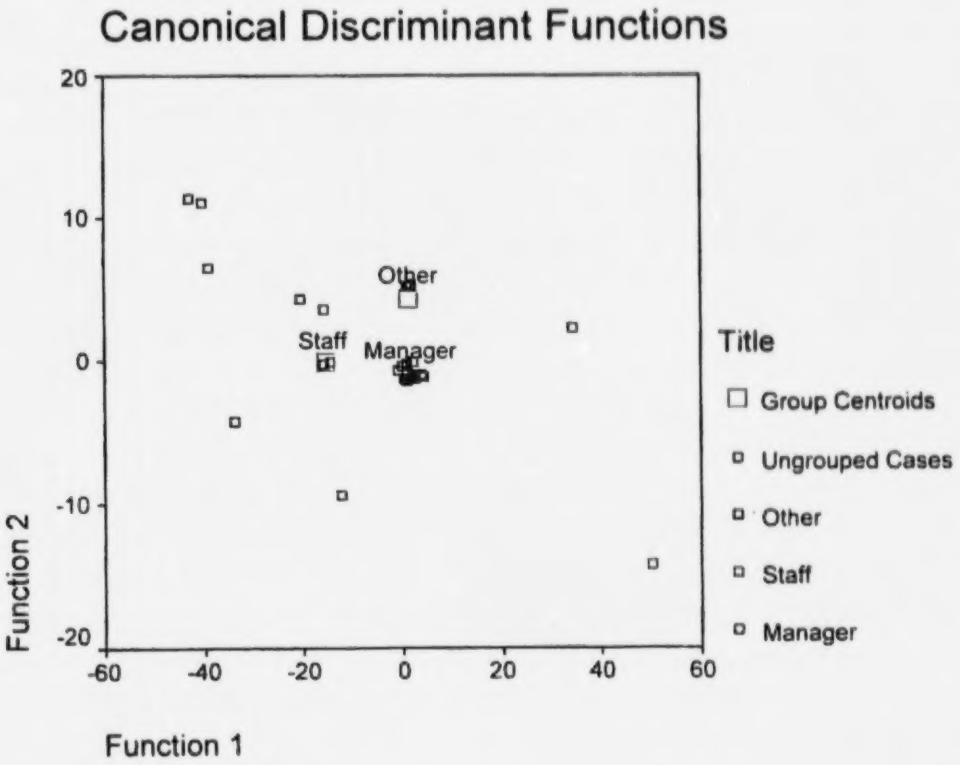

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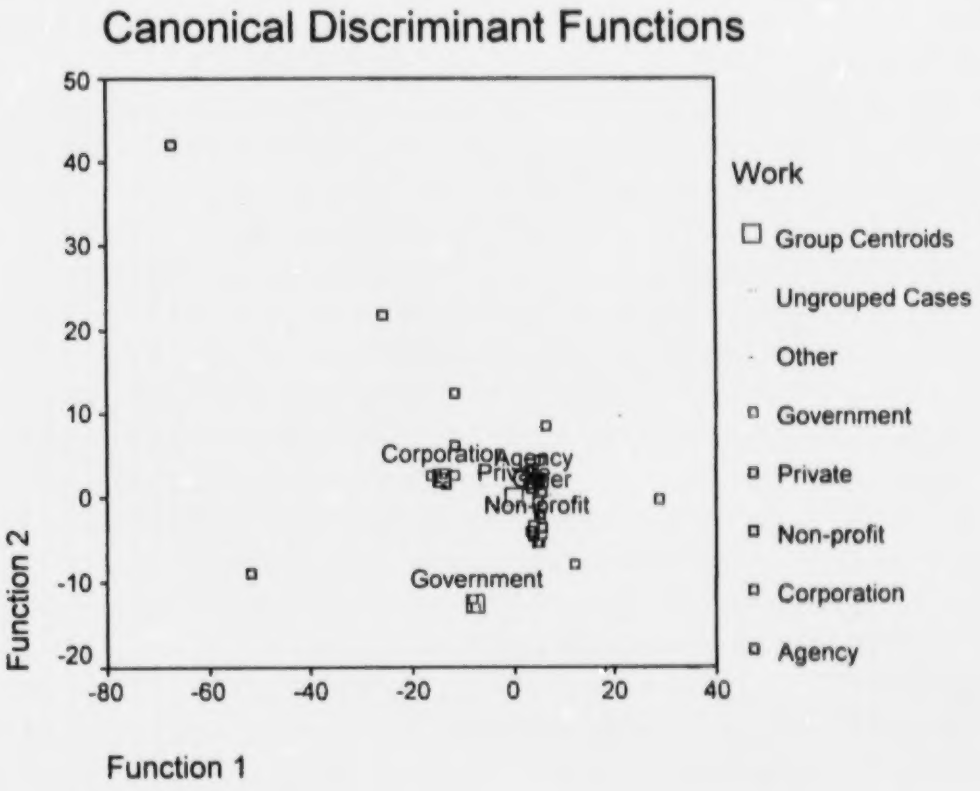
Figure 2

Canonical Discriminat Function Centroids of "Organizational Type" in Discriminant Space



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Leadership and Gender in Public Relations:
Perceived Effectiveness of Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles

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As the body of knowledge on leadership grows in management, business and marketing research, debate about leadership styles, skills and effectiveness also grows (Thompson, 2000). Traditionally, management scholars developed and investigated authoritarian versus participative styles of leadership and found limited variations on this binary theme. Today, leadership theories in management have expanded to include situational leadership and distinctions between styles (McWhinney, 1997; Thompson, 2000).

In public relations, however, there is no strong scholarly discourse on leadership. Although many public relations scholars have emphasized management, strategy and relationship building, three concepts potentially integral to leadership, there has been limited research examining the specifics of leadership within the public relations terrain. In addition, as the public relations profession has become over 70% female and feminization of the profession has become a significant concern, the relationship between leadership and gender needs to also be more fully examined by public relations scholars. Women are slowly moving into management roles, although arguably a glass ceiling still exists for many women. Yet the question as to whether women's leadership styles break through the glass ceiling or limit their advancement still remains.

Therefore, the purpose of the current research was to examine two critical issues of leadership in public relations today: 1) the leadership styles that are perceived as effective and appropriate for public relations; and 2) the gendered nature of leadership in public relations -- how leadership perceptions are different by gender, and how the concept of leadership itself is gendered in the public relations field. Findings from this study begin the development of a theory of leadership style for public relations.

Literature and Theory

Leadership has been studied by virtually hundreds of scholars (Murray, 1995; Rojahn &

Willemsen, 1994; Sims & Lorenzi, 1992). Pavitt, Whitchurch, McClurg, and Petersen (1995) commented, "It is safe to say that more than 7,500 studies relevant to leadership have appeared in the social science literature" (p. 243). Leadership has been defined as activity aimed at bringing about change in an organization or social system to improve people's lives (Astin & Leland, 1991, p. 7). More recently, McWhinney (1997) defined leadership as the process by which influencers and change makers affect a population (p. 184). McWhinney (1997) described leadership as the most important single factor in achieving resolution.

Much of the research in leadership has fueled a debate about whether to measure leadership in terms of inherent ability, skills, or style. Some scholars have asserted that all these aspects are integral to understanding leadership. McWhinney explained that skills are a complex matter of heritage and training (p. 185). Effectiveness is a question of match to a situation. Style defines the normal behaviors that follow from the worldview that one maintains (McWhinney, 1997). In other words, authoritarian leadership style derives from someone's deterministic or patriarchal worldview, and participative leadership derives from a social worldview. Leadership style has nothing to do with an individual's singular *ability* to lead, only with how the leading is understood.

Many current leadership theories are assumptions about style. McWhinney (1997) asserted that identification of style provides the basis of a theory of leadership. This basis is what is needed in public relations. Therefore, developing leadership theory in public relations should begin with assessing leadership styles and perceptions about styles. The leadership styles most often studied and explicated in management research are transactional, transformational and pluralistic leadership (McWhinney, 1997).

Leadership Styles

Transactional leadership, which is also called authoritative leadership, serves to articulate and establish positions held by the leader. These leaders are least supportive of intentional change. There is the "right" position, and other positions are excluded (McWhinney, 1997, p. 194). Primary characteristics of this leadership style include certainty, clear direction, personal oversight, and perceptions of "just" treatment (Cruz, Henningsen, & Smith, 1999). "Just" is defined as the idea that if the leader receives a benefit such as quality work performance or productivity, he/she will give a benefit, such as pay or benefits; this denotes the transactional nature of this style of leadership (Cruz, et al., 1999; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Through this exchange relationship, these leaders provide followers with a chance to satisfy their lower order material and psychic needs (Gardner & Cleavenger, 1998). The skillful transactional leader is likely to be effective in stable, predictable environments where charting activity against prior performance is the most successful strategy (Lowe, et al., 1996, p. 387). However, many current studies have found that transactional leadership alone is not as effective in increasing followers' job satisfaction or performance -- it is more effective in combination with other leadership styles (Gardner & Cleavenger, 1998; Lowe, et al., 1996; McWhinney, 1997).

Transformational leadership, also called charismatic leadership, is the most studied style of leadership (Bass, 1985, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1993, 1994; Gastil, 1994; Lowe, et al., 1996; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Shamir, Zakay, Breinin, & Popper, 1998; Yammarino, Dubinsky, Comer, & Jolson, 1997; Yukl, 1994). Transformational leadership is marked by the unique qualities surrounding charisma, "the power to captivate and energize a following" (McWhinney, 1997, p. 188). Kouzes and Posner (1995) actually defined leadership in terms of transformational leadership: "the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations" (p. 30). Transformational leaders are distinguished by their risk-taking, goal articulation, high expectations, emphasis on collective identity, self-assertion, and vision (Ehrhart & Klein, 2001; McWhinney, 1997). The central role of the charismatic leader is to use his/her vision to create meaning and symbols for followers, in order for them to change (Fairhurst, 2001). Holladay and Coombs (1994) and Fairhurst (2001) have indicated that transformational leaders communicate with eloquence and expressive language and manner.

Scholars have studied transformational leadership within various contexts (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999; Gardner & Cleavenger, 1998; Hunt, Boal, & Dodge, 1999). For example, some have examined transformational leadership less as a trait that can be possessed by an individual and more as a process that exists only in social relationships (Ehrhart & Klein, 2001; Gardner & Avolio, 1998). Oftentimes, transformational leadership is accepted and most appropriate during great upheaval or turmoil, as in during crises, during layoffs, or during corporate mergers (McWhinney, 1997). In general, studies have found that this style of leadership is the most effective overall, and is associated with higher job performance and positive follower attitudes (Berson, 2001; Ehrhart & Klein, 2001; Grundstein-Amado, 1999; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Rich, 2001; Yammarino & Dubinsky, 1994; Yukl, 1994).

Pluralistic leadership is characterized by participative decision-making, the recognition of other people, and the placing of value on others' opinions. This style is other-centered, emphasizing the development of followers to accomplish system goals (McWhinney, 1997). Interpersonal needs are balanced with system needs. These democratic leaders facilitate discussion and involve followers in goal setting and task completion (Cruz, et al., 1999). The leader who holds this style maintains equity in an environment seen as continually changing. Very little research was found that focused on this style of leadership. Instead, scholars emphasized the dichotomy between the transactional and transformational styles and subsumed pluralistic leadership into their definitions of transformational leadership.

Rather than focus on one leadership style, many scholars have argued for a situational theory of leadership (Casimir, 2001; Gastil, 1994; Hersey & Blanchard, 1982; Lord, Brown, Harvey, & Hall, 2001; Waller, Smith, Warnock, 1989). Although the situational theory of leadership has been criticized for lacking empirical robustness and internal consistency (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Norris & Vecchio, 1992), it is one of the most widely known, popular theories employed in management (Graeff, 1997). Scholars have asserted that effective leaders change their style to fit the situation, and therefore, may sometimes choose an autocratic style and sometimes a participatory style, depending on the circumstances and the environment. Job satisfaction, willingness to work, and performance were rated higher with combinative aspects of leadership statements (Casimir, 2001).

Sex Differences in Leadership

Since the 1970s, there have been studies measuring whether sex differences exist in leadership styles and effective leadership (Bartol & Butterfield, 1976; Chapman & Luthans, 1978). Research findings have been mixed; many scholars have argued that leadership styles are marked by sex differences, while others have found no differences. According to Butterfield and Grinnell (1999), "overall, this area of inquiry has been hotly contested" (p. 225).

Studies that have found support for sex differences have focused on perceptions of leadership (Butler & Geis, 1990; Casimir, 2001; Cooper, 1997; Doherty, 1997; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Ragins, 1991; Yammarino, et al., 1997). Female and male subordinates and superiors have rated women leaders with key aspects of transformational leadership, i.e., charisma and individualized consideration, more frequently than men (Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996; Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Carless, 1998; Maher, 1997). Druskat (1994) found that female subordinates rated female leaders as displaying significantly more transformational behaviors and significantly fewer transactional behaviors than male leaders who were rated by male subordinates. Some studies have shown that subordinates rated women as being less effective than men (Knott & Natalle, 1997; Korabik, Baril, & Watson, 1993). Eagly, Makhijani, and

Klonsky (1992) conducted a meta-analysis of experiments and concluded that female leaders were evaluated slightly more negatively than male leaders, and that male subjects had a stronger tendency to devalue female leaders. However, Luthar (1996) found that females gave higher performance ratings than males for female leaders. One study also indicated that when male leaders displayed feminine characteristics such as obliging, they were then rated as being less effective leaders (Korabik, et al., 1993). In their meta-analysis, Eagly, Karau and Makhijani (1995) found that men and women were equally effective in their leadership, but men were more effective when their roles were defined in masculine terms and women in roles defined as less masculine. In another study, women devalued their leadership accomplishments and took less credit for successful consequences. Women also rated their influence lower than did men (Cooper, 1997).

Other scholars have found no sex differences in leadership (Carless, 1998; Dobbins & Platz, 1986; Thompson, 2000; vanEngen, vanderLeeden, & Willemsen, 2001). Knott and Natalle (1997) examined perceptions of managerial leadership by superiors. Results revealed no significant sex differences, except for one out of 15 scales -- women managers were rated higher on "putting people at ease" than men were (p. 533). Komives (1991) similarly found no gender differences in transformational or transactional leadership ratings for residence hall directors.

There have been two theoretical perspectives frequently used to explain the mixed findings in gender and leadership research: socialization and structuralism. On one hand, it has been argued that sex differences in leadership exist due to gender socialization, where individuals manifest congruent, gendered stereotypical traits and behaviors that are not readily amenable to change (Cooper, 1997; Druskat, 1994; Maher, 1997; Portello & Long, 1994). Attributes considered instrumental and ascribed to males include being independent, goal oriented, objective, assertive, competitive, and logical; whereas, stereotypically expressive characteristics attributed to women include emotionality, nurturance, and sensitivity to others (Portello & Long, 1994, p. 685). Gendered stereotypical roles impact the behavior of women and men, subordinates' reactions to these behaviors, and the possibility of women exerting influence (Carli & Eagly, 1999, p. 222). This is often because women and men are constrained by expected gendered roles. Women who adhere to feminine leadership traits are perceived as better leaders, and men who display masculine behaviors are viewed as better leaders. If women and men display incongruent gender characteristics in their leadership, i.e., a woman being autocratic or a man being a good listener, then they are perceived as ineffective.

Gender differences in leadership have also been explained by specific organizational and industry contexts. Subordinates in certain types of organizations may share common expectations for appropriate leadership behaviors of men and women within those contexts (Maher, 1997). Eagly, et al. (1995) similarly argued that, although traditional leadership may in general be aligned with the male gender role, "roles within certain occupational categories or certain types of organizations may be defined in more androgynous terms" (p. 126). This may be particularly important to a study of gender and leadership in public relations, where the field has become 70% female and has taken on several feminized characteristics. For example, relationship-building, two-way symmetrical communication, and collaboration, three important public relations aspects and also characteristics ascribed as feminine (Rakow, 1989), have shown to result in increased organizational effectiveness (J.E. Grunig, et al., 1992). Therefore, perhaps women are better suited for leadership positions in public relations.

The main argument explaining the lack of sex differences derives from the structuralist approach. Any gender differences that may exist are negated by structural and job variables, such as job description, position in the hierarchy, and status. For example, in their meta-analysis of studies on gender and leadership style, Eagly, Karau and Johnson (1992) argued that the negligible evidence they found for sex differences could be explained by the constraints of job roles, which supercede gender stereotypes.

Other evidence indicates that both socialization and structuralism reciprocally influence leader behaviors (Lewis & Fagenson-Eland, 1998; Portello & Long, 1994). For example, Lewis and Fagenson-Eland (1998) found that leaders' self-reports were related to their gender, while supervisors' reports on the leaders were related to the organizational level of leaders.

Some have argued that transformational leadership may be characterized as more feminine, since the socialized characteristics of nurturing and supporting subordinates are integral to this leadership approach. Rosener (1994) found that women performed a type of leadership style similar to transformational leadership, which she termed "interactive" leadership (p. 15). Interactive leadership involves attempts to enhance other people's sense of self-worth, and criteria include participative management, the sharing of power and information, and the ability to energize staff. According to Maher (1997), "as organizations call for more transformational leadership to guide their organizations through change, women may be more accepted as leaders" (p. 211). Furthermore, transformational leadership has been positively associated with leadership effectiveness, so if women typically exhibit transformational leadership behaviors, "this may contribute to breaking the glass ceiling, as women are increasingly selected to occupy executive-level positions" (Maher, 1997, p. 212).

A few studies have suggested that transformational leadership requires a gender balance rather than a traditional stereotype of femininity or masculinity. Transformational leadership is a proactive and successful style of leadership that correlates strongly with both feminine and masculine gender characteristics, both interpersonal and task awareness (Hackman, Furniss, Hills, & Paterson, 1992). This is why, according to some scholars, there have been mixed findings in sex roles and leadership research where feminine styles of leadership have been pitted against masculine styles in operationalization.

Leadership in Public Relations

In public relations, there has been very limited research on leadership. In their landmark literature review for their Excellence Study, J.E. Grunig and his colleagues (Grunig, with Dozier, Ehling, L.A. Grunig, Repper, & White, 1992) included leadership among 12 characteristics of excellent organizations. Excellent organizations, J.E. Grunig (1992) argued, have leaders who rely on networking and "management-by-walking-around" rather than authoritarian systems. At the same time, excellent leaders provide a vision and direction for the organizations, "creating order out of the chaos that empowerment of people can create" (p. 16). This conceptualization suggests the transformational style of leadership. However, J.E. Grunig, et al. (1992) concluded that a situational leadership style is most effective, where leaders combine control with empowerment.

J.E. Grunig, et al. (1992) explained the implications of the leadership literature on public relations. First, CEOs and other organizational leaders spend most of their time on external affairs and community and political processes; therefore, understanding the CEOs in terms of their leadership capabilities is important to public relations' role as boundary spanners. Second, the combination of directing and empowerment suggests that excellent leaders/CEOs may foster a climate for a combination of the asymmetrical and symmetrical public relations model, the model found to be most effective for communication management (J.E. Grunig, et al., 1992).

Farmer, Slater, and Wright (1998) argued that much of the literature on a leader's visioning ability describes communication from a persuasive model, that "influencing strategies" come from the top down. However, they found that pluralistic leadership, characterized by two-way symmetrical communication, would be the most appropriate model. "The leader who encourages input from all levels of the organization is more likely to succeed than the leader who seeks to impose his or her agenda through either coercion or persuasion" (p. 222).

Only one study was found where gender was the focus in exploring public relations leadership (Aldoory, 1998). In-depth interviews were conducted with female leaders in the profession and in academia to explore their different leadership styles and use of language. Participants illustrated a mix of two-way and one-way communication when hypothetically responding to staff. The participants exhibited assertiveness, empathy and use of logical rather than emotional arguments. In general, participants illustrated transformational and interactive styles of leadership, but within a situational context. There were no studies in public relations that focused on *perceptions* of leadership styles and the gendered nature of these perceptions.

Research Questions

Research Questions were most appropriate for the current study due to the limited amount of scholarship specifically in public relations on leadership. The following RQs helped guide the study's data analysis and interpretations:

RQ1: What leadership style is perceived as the best or most appropriate for public relations?

The first step in understanding leadership in public relations was to examine general opinions about transactional, transformational and pluralistic characteristics of leadership as they applied to public relations settings.

RQ2: How do sex differences in respondents affect perceptions of leadership style?

Male respondents were compared to female respondents in their opinions about effective leadership style for public relations.

RQ3: How do respondents perceive a gendered nature of leadership in public relations?

Respondents were asked to give their opinions as to whether male or female leaders were more effective for public relations. Male and female respondents were also compared in terms of self-identification as leaders.

Method

Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed for this study in order to examine perceptions of leadership style and gendered leadership in public relations. Using survey and focus groups "triangulates" the data, offering greater breadth in description, depth in detail, and validity to the findings (van Zoonen, 1994). Also, the two methods lend different strengths to answering different Research Questions: a survey offered a better way to answer RQ2, while the focus groups offered an appropriate way to answer RQ3. A randomly sampled national survey of public relations practitioners was conducted first, and then six focus groups were held in three cities.

Survey

First, 4,000 printed questionnaires were distributed to a systematic random sample of current members of Public Relations Society of America.[1] Likert scale items were used to measure leadership traits and perceptions. The statements were derived from previous studies in leadership. There were a total of 14 leadership variables; this large number increased reliability as well as validity in the operationalization of leadership style. It also allowed for developing an index to better measure preference of leadership style. The leadership variables assessing transactional leadership included the following: "You cannot be emotionally involved and also be an effective leader"; "The most important criterion for a good leader is being in control at all times"; and, "Offering rewards is the only way someone can be a good leader today." Transformational leadership measures included: "Good leaders need to change self-interests into group needs"; "Today's leaders in PR need to challenge traditional ways of doing things"; "Effective leaders know that good rapport with employees is key"; "An effective leader in public relations enhances others' self worth"; and, "Leadership is about creating personal connections with employees." The following statements measured pluralistic leadership: "The best leaders are those that share the decision-making power"; and, "I prefer leaders who practice participative management." These last two are admittedly vague statements and can also be incorporated into an operationalization of transformational leadership. Other leadership statements included: "Males or females can be equally capable leaders"; "Women make better leaders than men"; and "I consider myself a leader in public relations." Demographic variables were also included.

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[1] The survey and focus groups were part of a larger study of public relations practitioners funded by the Public Relations Society of America.

A total of 864 completed questionnaires were received -- a 22% response rate. To confirm that the low response rate did not reflect a discrepancy between the sample and the population, frequencies were run and showed that the returned sample had similar characteristics as the PRSA membership on the whole. For example, age, education level, job characteristics, and the proportion of males to females were similar. Therefore, those who responded to the questionnaire and those who did not were not significantly different from each other.

The survey data were analyzed using SPSS, and frequencies were first run for all leadership, demographic and control variables. Pearson correlations measured relationships between leadership variables and other variables such as gender, age, and years of experience. Independent t-tests as well as ANOVAs assessed significant mean differences between males and females and between types of organizations.

Although the leadership variables were analyzed independently from each other, a leadership index was also created. A respondent's score on this index of preferred leadership style gave an indication of his/her relative preference vis-à-vis other respondents. An index of preferred leadership style distinguished those people who would be strong in preferring transformational leadership to those strong in preferring transactional leadership, and those who fall somewhere in between. Bivariate associations were measured for all the leadership items using Pearson's correlations. Many significant relationships existed between items, although the strengths of relationships were weak overall. For example, the more respondents agreed that the best leaders share decision-making power, the more they agreed that good leaders need to change self-interests into group needs (r=.28, p=.00). The more respondents agreed that they prefer leaders who practice participative management, the more they agreed that the best leaders share decision-making power (r=.31, p=.00). Multivariate analyses were then conducted. First, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was obtained (a = .668) and was highest when all the transformational and pluralistic variables were combined and no transactional variables were included. Also in the index was the variable about males or females being equally capable leaders. A total of 8 variables were combined to create the index. Then, item analysis was conducted for each variable as it correlated to the total index. Significantly strong correlations were found with each individual variable and the index. The resulting Leadership Preference Index ranges in score from 5, indicating the strongest preference for transactional leadership, to 40, indicating the strongest preference for transformational leadership. The index was used in data analysis; however, the individual leadership variables were also analyzed separately due to the index's early stages of development and testing.

Focus Groups

After the survey was analyzed, six focus groups were conducted to give richness and detail to interpretations of the survey data. One male group and one female group were held in each of three cities: Portland, OR, New York, NY, and Washington, DC. Participants for the focus groups were public relations practitioners who had a minimum of five years experience. Not all these participants were PRSA members. As incentives, participants were offered a copy of the research findings, dinner, and a donation to a national charity. Moderators for the groups matched the sex of the groups they facilitated and received a detailed packet of information prior to meeting their groups.

A guide of open-ended questions was used to facilitate the focus groups. The questions were based on the survey findings about leadership. Moderators asked participants about their opinions on different leadership traits, about leadership being inherent, and about gender differences in leadership. Questions also addressed personal experiences with leadership, personal identities as leaders, and suggestions for improving self-leadership.

The focus groups were audiotape recorded in order to grasp detail and exact quotes. The tapes were transcribed and analyzed for common themes as well as unique comments that emerged from the discussions.

Results

In general, the average survey respondent was a 40-year-old, white married female with a bachelor's degree who worked in public relations for a little over 13 years. The average, overall salary equaled $60,935 (Please see Tables 1 and 2 for survey demographics).

Tables 1 and 2 about here

Results are organized here according to how they answered the main Research Questions. Findings from the survey are explained first, and then findings from the focus groups help clarify and give richness to the perceptions found in the survey data.

RQ1: What leadership style is perceived as the best or most appropriate for public relations?

Overall, survey respondents agreed with the transformational and pluralistic leadership statements, and disagreed with transactional leadership statements (please see Table 3). For example, respondents strongly agreed that today's leaders in public relations need to challenge traditional ways of doing things (x=4.31), that effective leaders know that good rapport with employees is key (x=4.36), and that an effective leader in public relations enhances others' self worth (x=4.36). On the other hand, respondents disagreed that you cannot be emotionally involved to be effective (x=2.26), that the most important criterion is being in control (x=2.40), and that offering rewards is the only way to be a good leader (x=2.15). The Preferred Leadership Index score averaged to be very high, indicating a general preference for the transformational leadership style for public relations (x=33.78). No significant differences were found across type of organization and preferred leadership style.

Table 3 about here

Looking at bivariate relationships, many of the transformational and pluralistic leadership statements correlated significantly, though not often highly, with each other (please see Table 4). The strongest associations were found with the statement "Effective leaders know that good rapport with employees is key." The more respondents agreed with this statement, the more they agreed that an effective leader in public relations enhances others' self worth, that leadership is about creating personal connections, and that the best leaders share decision-making power.

Table 4 about here

Many leadership statements significantly and more strongly correlated in expected directions with age, years of experience and salary. For example, as age, years of experience, and salary increased, so did respondents' agreement that they considered themselves leaders in public relations. As age and years of experience increased, agreement increased that you *cannot* be emotionally involved to be effective. Older and more experienced respondents were more likely to *disagree* that effective leaders know that good rapport with employees is key. The Preferred Leadership Index was not found to correlate significantly with age, years of experience, level of education, or salary.

Similar to the survey findings, focus group transcripts also revealed participants' preference for a transformational leadership style. One frequently mentioned criterion for effective leadership was the ability to inspire others. A few participants described motivation as a leader's ability to bring people along with him/her. One participant distinguished a good leader from a manager, by stating "a manager can get people to do things, but getting somebody to do something is a lot different than inspiring someone to do it." One female participant defined motivating ability as "charisma that you can't put your finger on." One woman explained in a very excited manner how a new leader in her company started:

> He won everybody over…he was going to work with people in the group, he was going to help bring people up, and challenging some of the way things had traditionally been done, kind of opening the way and doing more than lip service at it.

An additional motivational characteristic was shared by one male participant, who said that a good leader was someone who can facilitate leadership in others, "someone who can recognize it," and "lets us lead at what we're the best at."

Some participants discussed the specific ways that leaders could motivate followers. For example, one participant commented, "You can only move someone so far with salary or vacation, but you can motivate someone through mentoring and …by giving them the opportunity to learn and grow." Other techniques to increase motivation included giving people respect and involving them in decision-making. Participants said that valuing and trusting followers was key to motivation. One participant explained, "They have good people, then they get out of the way, they don't micro-manage…."

Leader as mentor or teacher also frequently emerged from group discussions. As one woman put it, "Leaders forget that they have knowledge that they can share…the best leaders have taught me things that have made me a better professional." Participants generally agreed that mentoring was an important role for effective leaders.

Another frequently mentioned characteristic was that of participative decision-making. One male participant remarked, "Sharing decision-making power is certainly a lot more enjoyable in a work environment." This same participant gave advice to leaders in public relations:

> When you give [followers] an input, you don't ridicule them even if it's something knuckle-headed, you say, hey, thanks for your input. That's the kind of leadership that makes you feel good, you're actually part of a team.

The topic of rewards offered heated and lengthy discussion among focus group members. When the groups were told that the majority of survey respondents did not agree that rewards is the only way to be a good leader, most of them launched into discussion about whether rewards meant recognition. Most focus group participants agreed that reward in terms of recognition was very important to good leadership. Reward as recognition was generally defined as "just some little thing to say thank you." Another participant gave an example: "A reward can be coming into your office and sitting down and saying that was a heck of a campaign." One participant said rewards for employees can be "a pat on the back; they don't need money, just recognition form their peers for doing a great job. A male participant included even greater types of rewards:

> How good leaders do reward you is with trust, with respect, with faith in your judgment, they back you, they support you, and those are the kinds of rewards that are more valuable than money or other kinds of physical, tangible types.

Most participants wanted to make it clear that incentives, "offer[ing] you a cookie for doing well," or the "carrot stick approach" were not effective.

In addition to transformational and pluralistic traits, participants also included the ability to make decisions and stay in control. One woman said that "besides shared decision-making it's also making a decision, making a decision and saying it and then being willing to go with whatever the result of the decision is." This participant called this trait "attitude." Another participant lamented, "There'd be a lot of great leaders if they'd just step forward and said we should do this and stick with it." As another participant put it, "It's fairly easy to be a good leader when things are going well, but when things turn sour, the really good leaders step up and make decisions, and make sure decisions get made."

Only a few participants specifically used the term "vision" or "long-term view" to describe effective leadership. One participant said, "There's a definite direction of something. Anyone who proposes to be a leader…has to have some kind of vision of what we're all about."

A couple of groups talked about good leaders needing to be open to change. As one man said, people who continuously reinvent themselves are good leaders. One participant remarked, "I think it is the people who are constantly probing, and finding and figuring out over time, how do I get better at this."

A couple of groups brought up a preference for situational leadership. One participant said, "The problem is it seems to change every time, too, I mean depending on your project, you know. Another, male participant explained the importance of having varied leadership:

> Some leaders are great at driving the business, bringing in new clients…but they don't know how to bring people along with them, and obviously the other leaders are too focused on the people side and aren't willing to make the hard decisions that sometimes have to be made…different skill sets, the same thing, but applied differently.

There were some remarks that illustrated how the participants viewed leadership structurally specific to the public relations profession. For example, teamwork and leadership within teams was often discussed as an important part of public relations leadership. Similarly, leadership clashes with clients was raised as an issue unique to public relations. Being adaptable was referred to in terms of public relations, the need to stay up on changing business environment for clients. One male participant commented, "I think PR is interesting because

…you have to be able to adapt to change in this job." Another male participant critiqued the profession for focusing on technician skills, leaving young professionals unable to move up into leadership positions: "The people just fall flat on their face and its like all of a sudden you are expected to manage people…I think…we don't do anything necessarily early on to start fostering [leadership]."

RQ2: How do sex differences in respondents affect perceptions of leadership style?

Comparing survey responses of males to females resulted in a few significant differences, but overall, there were no really strong differences between male and female respondents and their preference for leadership style (please see Table 5). There were small but significant differences where women more than men agreed that effective leaders know that good rapport with employees is key, that leadership is about creating personal connections with employees, and that the best leaders share decision making power. The Leadership Preference Index scores did significantly differ between males and females, where females scored higher than males. However, the difference again was small.

Table 5 about here

Focus group responses by males and by females were remarkably similar to each other in terms of preferences for leadership styles. All groups regardless of sex focused on transformational and democratic qualities for leadership. Most individuals in groups talked about recognition as reward and about motivating others. However, there were three unique characteristics offered by focus group participants that should be mentioned, because they were unique to either the women's groups or the men's groups. These were the traits of helping others, of good communication and listening, and of using tangible rewards as incentives.

The women's focus groups included as effective leadership traits helping others, and looking out for people, "whether they work under you or not." Another women's group included good communication skills, good rapport, and a couple of groups discussed the importance of listening. These factors were not mentioned in the men's groups.

The one factor of good leadership mentioned in the male groups but not in the female groups was the use of tangible rewards for incentives. Although the men's groups explained the importance of recognition, they also added that monetary rewards should be used for incentives. One male participant illustrated this point by telling of an annual retreat to the Caribbean that was offered to an entire office. Another participant commented, "Some of my friends get gift bonuses, huge bonuses."

RQ3: How do respondents perceive a gendered nature of leadership in public relations?

On the survey questionnaire, the measures that were helpful in answering this RQ included whether participants considered themselves a leader and whether participants considered males or females as more effective leaders in public relations. Although small, there was a significant difference between male and female responses to considering self a leader in public relations. Males more strongly agreed that they considered themselves leaders ($t=3.18$, $p<.01$).

Overall, survey respondents did not agree that women made better leaders than men ($x=2.71$) and agreed strongly that males or females can be equally capable leaders ($x=4.57$). However, when respondents were compared by sex, a statistically significant difference was found where males more strongly *disagreed* that women made better leaders ($t=-11.58$, $p=.000$).

Detailed answers to RQ3 derived from the focus groups rather than the survey because the focus group data offered in-depth explanations for opinions about gendered leadership. In fact, most of the focus group discussions centered on gender differences in leadership.

Some participants, both male and female, argued that men and women were equally capable of being leaders. One male participant asserted, "It's up to the individual and it really doesn't have anything to do with gender." One female said, "I've worked for men and I've worked for women and I've liked both and I've disliked both."

However, most participants disagreed with the gender equality argument. Some female participants said that men and women define leadership differently and hold different status, which creates differences in leadership styles. These participants said that men define leadership as "power," "problem-solving," and "control." One woman said that men view leadership as being related to position, whereas "women see leadership as related to a set of qualities."

Unlike the general survey finding, most participants did express a preference for female leaders over male leaders. One male participant remarked, "We joke about, there's the guy who runs the place, then there's the woman who knows what's going on."

The reasons given for female preference, however, ranged. A male participant said that men who have years of experience in public relations are set in traditional, ineffective leadership modes, while younger, less experienced women are open to change and participative management. Another man said that female leaders are less likely to discriminate based on gender. He explained:

> We're cave man. We like that kind of cave man type thing. Experiencing our feminine side is a tough thing. But for women it's not. They have real empathy...but they tend, because of the treatment they've gotten over the years to be more even-handed...so I believe they tend to be better leaders.

The characteristic of empathy was often brought up as a feminine trait useful for leadership. As one man put it, women "can feel you more...which is helpful in terms of leading folks." Another man described why he enjoyed working for women as situational leadership:

> A lot of it was that the woman who became the leader...was extremely tough. And she was hard as nails and brought that to the table...And it was very good to work with her because you knew exactly which end was up, where you were

> going and why…in fact, she still, not to sound sexist, but sort of had the feminine traits, real good sensitivities around people.

Even though there was a general preference for female leadership, most participants admitted that, for social, structural or environmental reasons, women do not have the same leadership opportunities as men do in the industry. One male participant commented, "When you mix the genders together, then it starts to skew, with the guys coming out ahead." Another man remarked, "It's still a man's world." Several participants agreed that women have not been in public relations long enough to reach corporate leadership roles, and that clients and employees still prefer an experienced leader rather than an inexperienced one, regardless of charisma. Another participant said that specific organizational cultures affect women's ability to lead. One female participant explained that a male leader has more chances to hire and choose their teams, whereas women "might fall into it and just be given people." Another perspective found in a men's group suggested that men leave account service for the "business of public relations." One male in this group compared "functional leadership," which is the work of women, to "organizational, industry leadership," which is the venue for men. In this milieu, then, transactional leadership styles were perceived as more successful for the men's level of organizational leadership.

A few participants explained that socialization has constrained women's roles as leaders. For example, according to a couple of male participants, when women "tear someone's face off" it's tolerated more, but when they "just play the rank card, it goes over much worse." A male participant explained, "Because it's still so contrary to prevailing social roles of women, even successful women. So when they do it, whether they have to or not, I think there's a lot more ill feeling." Similarly, a female participant described when a male leader made a decision by himself, he was viewed as very decisive, but when a woman leader did the same thing, "she's viewed as, you know, what does she think she's doing without consulting us."

The socialization argument was also given by one of the female groups for why men are leaving or not entering the public relations profession. Some of these participants argued that men have difficulty being lead by women. Men have been socialized to be the ones giving directions and solving problems, so if a woman is in a leadership position, men have a hard time taking direction, "to go sit in their office and have a woman running the place." One participant explained how this has created an even more female-intensive field:

> I think women are really excellent account service people. I think it's one of the reasons we succeed in the field, and I think that when men don't succeed that well and don't make it up the ladder, they just bail out.

Discussion/Conclusion

This study used a quantitative survey and qualitative focus groups to start building leadership theory specific to public relations. As previous literature suggested (McWhinney, 1997; Rakow, 1989), this leadership theory started from perceptions of leadership style and focused on the gendered nature of leadership in public relations -- how leadership perceptions are different by sex, and how the concept of leadership itself is gendered in public relations. In summary, the focus group data supported survey results that indicated a strong preference for transformational leadership style over transactional leadership. Differences between transactional and pluralistic leadership styles were null. Focus group participants used terms to describe effective public relations leadership that were similarly used by scholars in describing transformational leadership: charisma, vision, and the ability to mobilize others. The findings here support previous studies that indicated strong relationships between transformational leadership and positive follower attitudes (Berson, 2001; Yammarino & Dubinsky, 1994).

The Leadership Preference Index, created with 8 transformational leadership variables, revealed internal consistency and a relatively high Cronbach's alpha. This index could be helpful in assessing general and comparative preferred leadership styles, but should be further tested for its usefulness in measuring public relations leadership. The Leadership Preference Index score for the survey sample indicated a high preference for transformational leadership. In addition, there was a difference between male and female respondents' scores, with females scoring slightly higher than males.

The focus group discussions showed support also for a situational leadership style, one that combines aspects of transactional and transformational leadership in dealing with unique circumstances and environments. This was evidenced in the participants' combined desire for control and decision making ability as well as empathy and collaboration. These findings support Grunig et al.'s (1992) assumptions about excellent leaders providing both control and empowerment. The findings also extend Aldoory's (1998) conclusions that women in public relations leadership positions are "situational rhetors," selecting certain transactional and transformational tactics depending on the situation (p. 97).

Many comments by focus group participants connected the unique nature of public relations, its work environment, structure and goals, to the need for transformational leadership. Previous researchers found that transactional leadership was more effective in stable, predictable environments (Lowe, et al., 1996), while transformational leaders thrived in turbulent times and during crises (McWhinney, 1997). Focus group participants described public relations as a job in a constantly changing, turbulent environment. This, then, may help explain their desire for transformational attributes in public relations leadership.

In terms of gender, there were significant differences between male and female survey respondents, how they perceived themselves as leaders, and how they perceived effective leadership, but these differences were not strong. Similar to Cooper's (1997) findings, the survey revealed that women rated themselves lower in terms of being a leader than men did. However, in general, the survey revealed few sex differences in perceptions of leadership style.

Even though the survey data revealed few differences, the focus group transcripts indicated strong opinions by both male and female respondents about the gendered nature of leadership. Just as past studies have met with conflicting findings, the survey and focus groups conflict in terms of gender and leadership in public relations. On a broad, descriptive level, few sex differences emerged. Yet, when individuals were offered time and confidentiality to share their opinions in focus groups, distinctions were made with regards to feminine and masculine forms of leadership, personal experiences with women and men leaders, and accounts of being leaders with male or female subordinates.

Overall, focus group participants perceived women as making better leaders in public relations due to the socialized traits they have acquired, i.e., empathy, collaborative efforts, which in turn create a transformational leadership style. This supports Maher's (1997) argument that women may be more accepted as leaders due to the connection between transformational style and feminine traits. However, focus group participants also generally agree that women do not have opportunities for leadership in public relations, due to both socialization and structuralism (Lewis & Fagenson-Eland, 1998; Portello & Long, 1994). Therefore, even though women are still ascribed stereotypically feminine traits, and even though these traits are associated with transformational leadership, which is seen as more effective, the participants asserted that women are not yet public relations leaders. Males with several years of experience who illustrate transactional leadership style still hold most of the leadership positions, according to some focus group participants.

In conclusion, with the help of a body of literature in management and with the results from this multi-methodological study measuring leadership perceptions, a public relations leadership theory is starting to emerge. The following are some theoretical assumptions to be further tested: 1) effective public relations leadership works within a worldview of transactional leadership; 2) but it functions on an operational level as situational; 3) at this point in time, due to the connections between transformational leadership and feminine traits, women may be more suited to be public relations leaders; however, 4) organizational culture, general business and economic environments, and socialized gender stereotypes all work to constrain leadership style and women in leadership positions.

The practical contributions of this study include the understanding of leadership styles as contingent on gender and on environment. The findings give public relations practitioners some support for choosing transformational leadership as an appropriate fit for accomplishing public relations goals. However, practitioners may also envision how different leadership styles work in different situations rather than focus on one stereotypical type of leadership. Women who are moving up into management positions may need to seriously consider the complexities of enacting a feminine, a masculine, or a mixed style of leadership, depending on circumstances.

Theoretically, this study has contributed to the public relations body of knowledge in several ways. First, it included a multi-methodological approach to studying leadership. Second, it helped close a gap in an area of research that has not been covered in public relations. Third, its theory building attempts and its creation of a Leadership Preference Index are fodder for several future studies in this area.

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Table 1: Percentages for gender, ethnicity and education.

Variables	%	N
Gender		853
Male	28.9	
Female	71.1	
Ethnicity		781
White, European American	89.1	
Black, African American	3.3	
Hispanic, Latino	1.9	
Asian, Pacific Islander	.6	
Native American	1.0	
Mixed and other ethnicities	4.1	
Education		853
High school or less	0.0	
Some college	2.7	
Bachelor's degree	64.0	
Master's degree	30.3	
Doctoral degree	3.0	

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Table 2: Means for salary, age, and years of experience by gender.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Salary			
Total	60,935.15	34,112.24	779
Male	73,706.35	37,264.49	216
Female	56,058.56	31,533.61	562
Age			
Total	40	11.02	812
Male	45	11.03	228
Female	38	10.40	583
Years of PR Experience			
Total	13.47	9.33	828
Male	17.44	10.49	240
Female	11.85	8.30	588

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Table 3: Means and standard deviations for leadership variables and Leadership Preference Index.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
I consider myself a leader in public relations.*	3.64	.98	827
Women make better leaders than men.*	2.71	.88	822
Males or females can be equally capable leaders.*	4.57	.62	825
You cannot be emotionally involved and also be an effective leader.*	2.26	.98	823
The most important criterion for a good leader is being in control at all times.*	2.40	.98	826
Offering rewards for good work is the only way someone can be a good leader today.*	2.15	.84	823
Good leaders need to change self-interests into group needs.*	3.91	.96	821
Today's leaders in public relations need to challenge traditional ways of doing things.*	4.31	.72	823
Effective leaders know that good rapport with employees is key.*	4.36	.71	826
An effective leader in public relations enhances others' self worth.*	4.36	.66	822
Leadership is about creating personal connections with employees and others.*	3.98	.89	823
The best leaders are those that share the decision-making power.*	4.17	.83	824
I prefer leaders who practice participative management.*	4.11	.75	823
Leadership Preference Index**	33.78	3.40	793

*Responses were coded: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = uncertain/not sure/don't know, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree.

** Index ranges from 5 to 40.

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Table 4: Pearson correlation coefficients for leadership variables, age, years of experience and salary

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. I consider myself a leader in public relations.*	-.06 821	.067 823	-.04 822	.05 825	-.03 821	.08a 820	.11b 822	.01 824
2. Women make better leaders than men.*		-.08a 818	.12b 818	.02 820	.12b 816	.06 816	.07 819	.05 819
3. Males or females can be equally capable leaders.*			-.09a 819	-.11b 822	-.13b 820	.11b 817	.19b 819	.19b 822
4. You cannot be emotionally involved and also be an effective leader.*				.16b 821	.05 818	.14b 816	.02 819	.02 820
5. The most important criterion for a good leader is being in control at all times.*					.17b 820	-.01 819	.02 821	.07a 823
6. Offering rewards for good work is the only way someone can be a good leader today.*						-.03 815	-.07a 817	-.01 820
7. Good leaders need to change self-interests into group needs.*							.25b 817	.12b 818
8. Today's leaders in public relations need to challenge traditional ways of doing things.*								.19b 820
9. Effective leaders know that good rapport with employees is key.*								
10. An effective leader in public relations enhances others' self worth.*								
11. Leadership is about creating personal connections with employees and others.*								
12. The best leaders are those that share the decision-making power.*								
13. I prefer leaders who practice participative management.*								
14. Age								
15. Years of experience								
16. Salary								

*Responses were coded: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = uncertain/not sure/don't know, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree.

[a] p < .05
[b] p < .001

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Table 4 continued: Pearson correlation coefficients for leadership variables, age, years of experience and salary

Variables	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. I consider myself a leader in public relations.*	.08a 820	.10b 822	.06 823	.04 821	.26b 793	.32b 814	.27b 763
2. Women make better leaders than men.*	.01 815	.07 817	.07a 818	.06 817	-.05 788	-.03 809	-.14b 760
3. Males or females can be equally capable leaders.*	.22b 818	.15b 821	.19b 820	.20b 820	-.00 791	-.03 812	.03 761
4. You cannot be emotionally involved and also be an effective leader.*	-.03 817	-.00 818	.01 819	-.08a 817	.11b 789	.08a 810	-.03 760
5. The most important criterion for a good leader is being in control at all times.*	.01 819	.01 821	-.10 822	-.06 820	-.02 793	.00 813	-.07 762
6. Offering rewards for good work is the only way someone can be a good leader today.*	-.09b 817	.03 818	-.12 818	-.01 818	-.03 789	-.03 810	-.01 759
7. Good leaders need to change self-interests into group needs.*	.14b 814	.12b 816	.28b 817	.21b 816	.08a 788	.10b 808	.05 758
8. Today's leaders in public relations need to challenge traditional ways of doing things.*	.18b 816	.14b 818	.25b 819	.16b 817	.01 789	.02 810	.03 761
9. Effective leaders know that good rapport with employees is key.*	.39b 820	.26b 820	.20b 821	.23b 820	-.10b 792	-.10b 813	-.06 762
10. An effective leader in public relations enhances others' self worth.*		.25b 816	.23b 817	.26b 816	.07 789	.04 809	.03 759
11. Leadership is about creating personal connections with employees and others.*			.16b 819	.19b 818	-.04 789	-.04 811	-.12b 759
12. The best leaders are those that share the decision-making power.*				.31b 818	.04 790	.03 811	.01 760
13. I prefer leaders who practice participative management.*					.08a 790	.06 811	.07 760
14. Age						.82b 796	.42b 750
15. Years of experience							.46b 764
16. Salary							

*Responses were coded: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = uncertain/not sure/don't know, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree.

[a] $p < .05$
[b] $p < .001$

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Table 5: Independent t-tests for leadership variables by respondent's gender.

	Gender				
Variables	Female Means (&SD)	Male Means (&SD)	t value	df	significance
1. I consider myself a leader in public relations.*	3.57	3.80			
	(1.00)	(.91)			
	n=585	n=240	3.18	823	p < .01
2. Women make better leaders than men.*	2.90	2.23			
	(.87)	(.71)			
	n=581	n=581	-11.58	818	p = .000
3. Males or females can be equally capable leaders.*	4.58	4.54			
	(.62)	(.64)			
	n=584	n=238	-.73	821	ns
4. You cannot be emotionally involved and also be an effective leader.*	2.23	2.33			
	(.97)	(1.00)			
	583	238	1.34	819	ns
5. The most important criterion for a good leader is being in control at all times.*	2.38	2.44			
	(.97)	(.98)			
	n=584	n=240	.80	822	ns
6. Offering rewards for good work is the only way someone can be a good leader today.*	2.18	2.09			
	(.84)	(.84)			
	n=584	n=237	-1.44	819	ns
7. Good leaders need to change self-interests into group needs.*	3.89	3.95			
	(.97)	(.94)			
	n=580	n=239	.82	817	ns
8. Today's leaders in public relations need to challenge traditional ways of doing things.*	4.32	4.28			
	(.69)	(.78)			
	n=582	n=239	-.63	818	ns
9. Effective leaders know that good rapport with employees is key.*	4.41	4.23			
	(.66)	(.81)			
	n=585	n=239	-3.14	822	p < .01
10. An effective leader in public relations enhances others' self worth.*	4.37	4.33			
	(.65)	(.69)			
	n=582	n=238	-.78	818	ns
11. Leadership is about creating personal connections with employees and others.*	4.05	3.81			
	(.85)	(.95)			
	n=583	n=238	-3.36	819	p < .01
12. The best leaders are those that share the decision-making power.*	4.22	4.07			
	(.77)	(.96)			
	n=582	n=240	-2.13	820	p < .05
13. I prefer leaders who practice participative management.*	4.14	4.05			
	(.73)	(.79)			
	n=582	N=239	-1.45	819	ns
Leadership Preference Index**	33.98	33.27			
	(3.20)	(3.82)			
	n=558	n=233	-2.51	789	p < 05

*Responses were coded: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = uncertain/not sure/don't know, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree.

** Index ranges from 5 to 40.

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Five Decades of Mexican Public Relations in the United States:

From Propaganda to Strategic Counsel

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Abstract

Five Decades of Mexican Public Relations in the United States: From Propaganda to Strategic Counsel

This paper describes U.S. public relations for Mexico through a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of 940 Foreign Agents Registration Act listings from 1942 through 1991.

The article delineates the shift from government to industry representation, the move from press agentry and public information models to more research and counsel, centralization trends, and the evolving roles of US public relations from technicians to high-stakes public relations managers. The continuing robust technician role is confirmed.

Five Decades of Mexican Public Relations in the United States: From Propaganda to Strategic Counsel

The last Mexican presidential election two summers ago introduced President Vicente Fox to the world scene and brought an end to the post-Cardenas PRI domination of the presidency. U.S. President George Bush's choice of Fox as the guest of his first White House state dinner was a hopeful symbol of 21st century relationship building after the often tense 20th century bilateral relations.

The body of international public relations literature has been growing, albeit slowly, since the 1990s. But we know little about the U.S. public relations efforts of one of our closest neighbors and second largest trading partner, Mexico. In order to comprehend 21st Century Mexican public relations in the United States and the role of public relations in relationship-building between two countries, it is useful to understand 20th Century Mexican public relations.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the U.S. public relations efforts of Mexico that were documented in five decades of Foreign Agent Registration Act listings from the first report in the early 1940s through 1991. Through quantitative and qualitative content analysis, the study describes geographic centers of public relations efforts, types of public relations activities, organizations represented, and public relations budgets (when financial data were collected). Through this descriptive content, public relations roles and models of public relations were examined and other trends were observed.

The history of U.S. public relations is overflowing with examples of how U.S. government, corporations, and non-profit organizations have achieved their organizational goals and/or built relationships with stakeholders. And the history of Mexico-US relations is replete with what the U.S. "did to" Mexico. The present study is an example of how Mexico took advantage of U.S. communication expertise to achieve its own goals – sometimes "using" the system to empower itself and communicate strategically to develop as a nationstate.

Understanding Mexican public relations in the United States adds to the communication literature in three ways: it contributes to our understanding of domestic (U.S.) public relations history and how it developed; it adds to our understanding of the evolution of international public relations; and it contributes a context for analysis of 20th Century media coverage of Mexico because of the role public relations plays in setting the media agenda and frames.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation

Four role concepts developed by Broom and Smith (1979) have been widely used in public relations research to look at public relations practice, including differences in gender roles (Broom, 1982; Broom & Dozier, 1986), salaries (Dozier & Broom, 1995), environmental scanning (Dozier, 1990; Lauzen & Dozier, 1992), and strategic planning and research (Broom & Dozier, 1986; Dozier, 1985; Judd, 1987). Although practitioners may play many roles within their practice, they tend to enact one role more frequently than others.

One role is a **communications technician**. While functioning as a technician, the public relations person is mainly concerned with producing communication materials. He implements communication programs but does not participate in the decision-making process that planned the programs. Another role is the **expert prescriber**. Unlike the technician, the expert prescriber is the authority on public relations challenges and solutions. However, she is segregated as the expert, without integrating public relations into the management of the organization. Because there is no vested interest by executives, according to Broom and Dozier (1986), this is a high-risk role for public relations professionals.

A third role is the **communications facilitator**. the boundary spanner. The fourth role is **problem-solving process facilitator**. When a practitioner enacts this role, she participates in the dominant coalition to define organizational problems and collaborate on the strategic planning and programming to meet the challenges. Collapsing the manager roles into one role and separating the technician role as a second function has been useful in a number of studies. In his reanalysis of roles data from three studies, Dozier (1992) determined that the manager and technician roles were stable and robust. Given this and limitations of the FARA data, the present study will differentiate between **manager** and **technician** roles only.

Broom's roles are the roles of practitioners, but Grunig's concept of roles (referred to as models of public relations in the rest of this paper) looks at the way the function is practiced in organizations, what J. E. Grunig and L. A. Grunig describe as the "public relations behavior" of organizations (1989, pp. 30-31). One-way communication models are the **press agentry** and **public information** models; two-way communication models are the **two-way asymmetric** and **two-way symmetric** models. Like the two-way asymmetric model, the symmetric model relies on the use of research by the public relations practitioner (J. E. Grunig & Hunt, 1984). However, the research's intent is to develop relationships between an organization and its publics, rather than merely serve the organization's goals. Two-way symmetric public relations relies on negotiating and conflict resolution strategies to further relationships. Fundamental to the public relations manager role is two-way communication, especially because of the environmental scanning and research that is necessary to fulfill a manager role (Dozier & Broom, 1995; J. E. Grunic & L. A. Grunig, 1989; Judd, 1987).

Both the manager role conceptualizations and the two-way symmetric model of public relations serve as underpinnings for recent public relations research on relationship building. Broom et al. reinvigorated the concept of relationships in their 1997 model-building piece. They described relationships as dynamic patterns of linkages. One of their conclusions was that relationship formation and maintenance represents a process of mutual adaptation and contingent responses, suggesting the significance of the public relations manager role(s) and two-way symmetric public relations.

International Public Relations Research

Banks (1995, p. 103) defines international public relations as public relations performed in nations other than the headquarters of the organization. The subject of this paper -- public relations on behalf of Mexican organizations and conducted in the United States -- fits this definition.

International public relations studies can be grouped into a couple of clusters. Case studies of public relations in a particular country or set of countries comprise one cluster (e.g., Culbertson & Chen, 1996; Grunig, Grunig, Sriramesh, Huang, & Lyra, 1995; Moss & DeSanto, 2002; Sriramesh, Kim, & Takasaki, 1999). The second cluster is made up of theoretical pieces, or recommendations on future directions for research (Epley, 1992, Grunig, 1992; Hiebert, 1992, Symmott & McKie, 1997). Culbertson points to the bodies of work on roles of practitioners and models of public relations practice as theoretical bases for international public relations (Culbertson & Chen, 1996).

Some studies have examined the models of public relations previously mentioned in various countries. For instance, Grunig et al. (1995) found that press agentry and public information models dominated over two-way models in India, Greece, and Taiwan. In addition to one-way models, two-way asymmetric, and two-way symmetric models, they found practices that clustered into two other models that they named **personal influence** and **cultural translator** models. The personal influence model concentrated on personal relationships with journalists as a way to get coverage (rather than generating coverage via the special events of press agentry or the legitimate news in public information). This personal influence model bordered on unethical practices in some situations, and was unethical in other instances. The cultural translator was normally a native practitioner who provided input on the "language, culture, customs, and political systems of the host country" to non-native practitioners. Grunig et al. suggest that the most effective long-term model might be a combination of the two-way symmetric model, symmetrical (and ethical) personal influence, and symmetrical cultural translation approach.

Other international studies have suggested paths for international public relations research. For instance, Moss and De Santo (2002) note that the growth of international corporations has been paralleled by the growth of large international public relations consulting agencies. The present study logged the efforts of large public relations consultancies, and the analysis of their efforts will be discussed later in the paper. Some scholars fear the growth of international public relations firms means we have lost the "local" in public relations. Epley (1992) and Banks (1995) offered the global/local principle: setting an organization's policy and objectives with a global perspective, but designing and implementing communication campaigns at a local level.

Academics like Botan (e.g., 1992; 1993) have called for more international public relations research (expressing concerns about ethics and ethnocentrism), and practitioners want more information about international PR, too. Synnott & McKie (1997) identified the globalization of public relations and the reality of intradependence and interdependence between nations as one of the top areas for research identified by practitioners in 13 countries.

Lobbyists in the United States

One other area of the literature is pertinent to this study: research on lobbyists. Terry describes the public relations aspects of lobbyists' work: "Public relations practitioners, again including lobbyists, work to create meaningful representations of their clients' worlds for their respective publics" (2001, p 245). In her interviews with lobbyists, Terry (2001) found that lobbyists enact both manager and technician roles. She notes that lobbyists' work is at the center of public policy making. Her work looked not only at what practitioners did, but how they perceive what they did. The present study is limited to the functionalistic aspects of public relations for Mexico, rather than combining activities with perceptions, because of FARA data limitations.

News from Mexico in US Media

Content analyses of Mexico's coverage in U.S. media, and even Latin America's visibility in U.S. media, have shown that little attention has been devoted to our neighbors in the Americas. This is of concern because studies have provided evidence that mass media images of racial and ethnic others influence readers and viewers, and that the media messages and images are more significant when direct contact with "others" – like people or organizations in other countries -- is limited (e.g., Fujioka, 1999; Seiter, 1986).

In the past three decades, much of the research about U.S. news coverage of Mexico has been folded into studies of Latin American coverage (e.g., Hester, 1974; Johnson, 1993; Sharbush, 1993) or focused on particular events or topics like NAFTA (e.g., Schmitt, 1995).

One Mexico news study looked at 1979-1988 coverage in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and three networks (Bailey, 1989). The author found that the print coverage focused on politics and economics. Drug-related subjects were the third most frequently covered. The television networks were less consistent in coverage, tending to cover Mexico in bursts related to dramatic events, like the Mexico City earthquake of 1985, and drug stories after 1984. Comparing coverage to public opinion surveys, Bailey concluded that coverage was correlated with issues on the public opinion agenda, but the news media had done little to furnish readers or viewers with useful information about the issues.

Laiches (1980) investigated Mexico in four elite U.S. newspapers from 1972-1978. Subjects receiving attention included political violence, especially violence aimed at Americans; Mexican domestic affairs, and Mexican foreign affairs. Depending on the year, other subjects receiving attention were U.S.-Mexico criminal activity (including drug smuggling); illegal immigration; visits to the U.S. by Mexicans; petroleum discoveries; and problems related to travel in Mexico. Laiches summarized that rather than focus on key issues in Mexican domestic and foreign policy, coverage in the seven-year period centered on Mexican roots of problems with which the United States grappled. Foreign coverage reflected Mexico's importance to neighborhoods in the United States, not Mexico's importance to the world.

Aguayo's comprehensive study on the *New York Times* coverage of Mexico from 1946 to 1997 analyzed 6,903 articles (1998). He found U.S. news displayed a "permanent optimism" toward Mexico, indifference about the impact U.S. decisions had on Mexico, continued lack of coverage about authoritarian and corrupt administrations (until actions were egregious) because of the self-interest in keeping Mexico stable, and continued portrayals of Mexican passivity. Like other Mexico news coverage studies previously mentioned, negative events and topics garnered their share of peaks in coverage.

While varying depending on the era, the dominant topics found in U.S. coverage of Mexico appear to replicate other countries' coverage of Mexico, as well. For instance, in a large-scale foreign news dataset from 40 nations in 1979, the most typical main topics of stories about Mexico were economic matters, sports, domestic politics, and international politics (Stevenson & Shaw, 1984). Dominant themes about Mexico in news analyzed from 29 nations in a related study were terrorism, human rights, energy, and the division between the rich and poor (Sreberny-Mohammadi et. al., 1985). In summary, whether in separate research or included in larger studies, since the 1970s the most typical topics in news about Mexico were domestic government and politics, international politics, and economics. In certain periods recently, crime, drugs, and immigration received attention.

To summarize the communication literature, Mexican public relations conducted in the United States has not been the subject of a comprehensive study (at least in English-language publications) and is important in understanding relationship building between these neighboring nations. Media studies point to a lack of attention to Mexico in U.S. media and biases in the topics covered. The literature also indicates that practitioner roles and models of public relations are useful frameworks for understanding the history of Mexican public relations in the United States.

Although most role and models of public relations studies are cross-sectional designs implemented via survey research and in-depth interviews, this study attempts a longitudinal analysis. The method, however, while providing historical perspective, is limited in the depth of information about each organization and makes a leap of faith when attempting to summarize activities of individuals based on their brief reports about tasks. Given prior studies, the theoretical foundation, and these methodological limitations, the study's research questions are as follows:

Research Questions

RQ1: What aspects of public relations roles were dominant in FARA listings for Mexico during each of the decades of study, and how did they differ in different periods?

RQ2: What models of public relations practice were suggested by FARA listings for Mexico during each of the decades of study, and how did they differ in different periods?

RQ3: In what U.S. geographic centers was public relations for Mexico practiced, and did the location of public relations practice differ in different decades?

RQ4: On behalf of what Mexican organizations did U.S. public relations practitioners work? How did clients differ from decade to decade?

Method

The Foreign Agent's Registration Act (FARA) was enacted in 1938 and has been amended several times since then. It requires that agents in the United States performing certain activities for foreign principals register with the U.S. government. In June of 1942 administering the act was transferred from the Department of State to the Department of Justice, and the first report published report covered the years 1942-1944.

Although the original activities requiring reports were propaganda and public relations, the 1942 amendments broadened the definition of a foreign agent to include attorneys and commercial agents whose clients were foreign governments or chambers of commerce. Information departments within foreign embassies are exempt from FARA, as are diplomats. Also exempt are persons engaged "in furtherance of bona fide religious, scholastic, academic, or scientific pursuits or of the fine arts," as are those raising funds "to alleviate human suffering." The act also exempts individuals involved "only in private, nonpolitical, financial, mercantile, or other activities in furtherance of the bona fide trade or commerce of such foreign principal."

As this paper will show, activities of interest have changed over the years, but the key concerns are advertising, public relations, and lobbying efforts. In the early years the reports covered several years at a time, but by the late 1990s (depending on the U.S. administration) the reports were issued twice a year. While Janet Reno was attorney general during the Clinton administration the reports were made available online through the Department of Justice website. Since John Ashcroft has been attorney general no additional reports have been made available online.

Sample

A census of all FARA listings under Mexico through the report ending in 1991 was conducted, and a code sheet was completed for each listing. All FARA listings are in English, although names of some Mexican organizations (obviously) were in Spanish, depending on the listing. Prior to 1978, some information was available in cross-listings, but financial information was mostly unavailable. Beginning in 1978, reports featured more complete descriptions of activities and budgets, except in 1988-1991, where reports were a bit sketchy. Reports differed significantly from period to period, but always featured the general nature of the activity, the organization represented, the organization conducting public relations or lobbying efforts in the United States, and the address of the public relations/lobbying representative.

Coding and Protocol

After developing the research questions and scanning the listings from 1942-2000, a code sheet was developed. It was pretested with a random sample of 20 FARA listings/cross-listings and modified. Measures for activities were based on measures for manager/technician roles (e.g., Dozier & Broom, 1995) and the four models of public relations (e.g., Grunig, 1976), but tailored to the descriptors used in the FARA listings. Some measures that are not specifically in PR roles or models of PR studies were added, such as lobbying and investor relations/financial counsel. Legal counsel is also listed in FARA, and this study coded for legal counsel in order to compare it with public relations counsel. Some legal counsel was conducted in conjunction with environmental scanning and lobbying.

In addition to the quantitative coding, the researcher compiled notes on other information provided in the listings and cross-listings. These notes were analyzed for general patterns and are reported in the results section along with results of the quantitative analysis. One researcher coded all of the data.

The quantitative code sheet is included in Appendix One. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS. Intracoder reliability for the quantitative data in a small subset of double-coded listings ranged from 82-86% (communication activities, type of Mexico organization) to 96-100% percent (year, contract amount, location of U.S. registrants, names of registrants and Mexican foreign principal). These were considered acceptable for the purposes of this descriptive historical overview.

Results

The following will discuss patterns of public relations in each decade by presenting quantitative information and adding observations from the qualitative analysis. Length restrictions prevent discussion of all the variables.

Roles of Practitioners and Models of Public Relations over Five Decades

One significant element of the manager role is research. Five measures of research were coded: media research and monitoring U.S. media for Mexican clients; conducting legislative research and environmental scanning (e.g., keeping abreast of tariff discussions); conducting communication audits; Internet/website monitoring; and conducting other research or data analysis (could include market research). Although there was one mention of monitoring news coverage in the 1940s, 90% of media-related research occurred from 1970-1991. Again, with one exception in the 1960s, 98% of environmental scanning/legislative scanning was recorded after 1970. Eighty percent of other research and data analysis was logged after 1970. No communication audits or Internet monitoring were listed in the 1942-1991 period; the pretest indicated that these items will be appropriate when all 1990s data are analyzed.

Another way the manager role was measured in the FARA listings was by looking for the words counsel, strategic planning, policy advice, and other synonyms. Although the term public relations counsel was used once in the 1940s, 50% of the usage occurred after 1979. Policy counsel or policy advice was not used until 1970; 54% of the usage occurred in the 1980s. Financial/investor relations counsel was not mentioned until the 1960s and appeared in only one percent of the items.

The technician role was measured with more items than the Dozier and Broom study (1995) because the present study analyzed existing content and the descriptors in use by the registrants. The variables that comprised the technician role were:

- Disseminate propaganda
- Publicity and media relations; press releases, feature stories, media photos, media calls, etc
- Promotions (unspecified)
- Media training
- Speaker training
- Produce/distribute newsletters and magazines (regular schedule of publication)
- Prepare/distribute collateral materials (brochures, booklets, posters, fact sheets, etc.)
- Develop mailing/contact lists
- Plan/implement special events

- Exhibit/produce photographs, slide shows, videos, films, other media-based exhibits.
- Exhibit (make arrangements) art and handicrafts
- Attend conferences, trade shows, on client's behalf
- Public speaking (arrange engagements, write speeches, deliver speeches on client's behalf)
- Write/produce annual report(s)
- Create website(s)

Of course, the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938 was created because of a concern about 1930s propaganda in the United States created by non-U.S. citizens. But after the 1940s, the term propaganda was never used again in Mexico listings (at least through 1991). However, almost ten percent of all 940 listings included a mention of publicity. Out of these 91 mentions, nine percent were in the 1940s, four percent in the 1950s, eight percent in the 1960s, 24% in the 1970s, 46% in the 1980s, and nine percent in the years 1990-91. Clearly, then, media relations was an ongoing function throughout the decades. The value of sheer numbers of "things distributed" is displayed in some of the 1970s reports, exemplifying practitioners earning a living as "journalists in residence." For instance, in 1972, Ruder & Finn, New York documented that it distributed 2,400 news releases (on behalf of all foreign clients, not just Mexico). Reports of numbers of press releases, statements, booklets, etc. disappeared from FARA later in the 1970s, suggesting that public relations counselors realized that the value of their work extended beyond mere quantity of output.

Promotion, too, was a continuing function and mentioned in 12% of the 940 listings, but unlike publicity more heavily weighted in the earlier years. Ten percent of the mentions were in the 1940s, 18% in the 1950s, 22% in the 1960s, 40% in the 1970s, just nine percent in the 1980s, and fewer than three percent in 1990-91.

More than 90% of newsletter/magazine production and distribution occurred between 1942 and 1970. One example was *Sugar y Azucar*, published by Rouss & O'Rourke for the National Association of Sugar Producers of Mexico. Newletters included the California and Texas production/distribution of a "house organ" for Union Nacional Sinarquista. This conservative organization was started by Catholics who sought an alternative to the anticlerical movement of Lázaro Cárdenas in the 1930s. From 1940 to 1942 the union's leader (Salvador de Abascal) attempted to establish a Sinarquista colony, but the colony failed in 1944 when the union's leadership withdrew its support due to pressure from the Vatican, United States, and Mexico. Sinarquista newsletters, however, continued through 1968.

On the other hand, collateral materials such as brochures and fact sheets were not discussed until the 1970s. Almost three-quarters of the listings for collateral material were in the 1980s. Examples of two booklets disseminated by Ruder & Finn in 1983 were *Mexican Thesis on Foreign Investment* and *Development in Freedom: The Policy of Change in Mexico.* Fact sheets were mentioned in connection with a variety of target publics and appeared to be the trendy public relations tools of the 80s.

Production, exhibition, and/or distribution of audio-visual tools reflected new orientations toward visual communication and technology shifts. Although Mexico paid a Los Angeles firm to produce/distribute "motion pictures" about Mexico in the 1940s (presumably short travel films), most of the audio-visual activities were in the 1970s (50 %) and 1980s (28%). These included photo exhibits, videos, and films. A 1984 item contained the first description of a professional trade show exhibit company designing, constructing, transporting, installing, and storing an exhibit. Previously, listings mentioned exhibits but did not provide this detail.

Employees in Mexican government tourist offices were responsible for attending or exhibiting at travel conferences and giving speeches about Mexico in many U.S. cities. Likely target publics were consumer travelers, travel agents, and others in the travel industry. Given the plethora of tourism offices in the 1970s and early 1980s, 85-90% of these activities were listed in the 1970s and 80s. (As discussed in more detail later, tourist office numbers declined later in favor of concentration in three cities and more reliance on U.S. public relations agencies.)

Technician tasks that were not reported in the 1942-1991 listings included media training, speaker training, writing annual reports, and creating websites. Seven percent of FARA listings filed on behalf of the Mexican government or other Mexican organizations reported no specific activities. In short, although types of communication tactics differed among decades, the technician role remained robust from the 1940s through the early 1990s.

Advertising and Public Relations

The "umbrella" term public relations was used more in the 1970s (59 percent of the mentions) than in other time periods. Four percent of mentions were in 1940s listings, six percent in the 1950s, 15% in the 1960s, and just 12% in the 1980s. Fewer than five percent of mentions were in 1990-91.

Although a separate profession, it is interesting to compare advertising conducted on behalf of Mexico or Mexican organizations. Whereas public relations as a term was used in 11% of the 940 listings (and many other public relations-related terms were used on top of this 11%), advertising was noted in only eight percent. No advertising was listed for the 1940s. Seven percent of advertising efforts were in the 1950s, 14% in the 1960s, 46% in the 1970s, 23% in the

1980s, and 11% in 1990-1991. Advertisers served mostly tourism-related clients, and the clients hired reputable large agencies with Madison Avenue addresses to conduct their campaigns.

Interpersonal Communication Grows

As noted in the literature review, lobbying is a special category of public communication that receives little attention in the public relations literature. Twelve percent of FARA listings included lobbying efforts by the Mexican government, businesses, and industry groups. No lobbying efforts were listed in the Good Neighbor years of the 1940s. Just two percent were listed in the 1950s, and almost four percent in the 1960s. However, this jumped to 26% in the 1970s, 50% in the 1980s, and 19% in 1990-1991. Other non-politically based liaison activities increased after the 1960s, as well. More than a third of the liaison activities took place in the 1970s, 44% in the 1980s, and 16% in 1990-91.

Although Grunig et al. (1995) noted the importance of "cultural translators" in their study, not many U.S. Hispanics (as measured by Spanish surnames) appear to be counseling Mexico unless they were unnamed practitioners working for consulting firms. One of the 940 listings (in 1991) described Edward Hidalgo of Washington, who "contacted members of Congress and Hispanic organizations to ascertain their views on NAFTA." Except for this mention, Latino groups as target publics also were unnamed.

Increased Centralization

It is no surprise, then, that when public relations for Mexico evolved from reliance on media and controlled tools to more in-person lobbying and liaison, the geographic loci of public relations changed, too. Overall Washington and New York were the centers of Mexican communications (about 25% each), with Los Angeles garnering a tenth of the business and Chicago about seven percent. The patterns are interesting, though, when examining location of registrant by decade. Los Angeles peaked in the 1970s and dropped off sharply in the 1980s. New York surpassed Washington in the 1970s but dropped relative to the U.S. capital in the 1980s and early 1990s. Starting in the mid 1980s the Southwestern and Southern U.S. cities lost significant ground in Mexican public relations, and Washington public relations and public affairs firms picked up their business.

Cross-tabs of public relations, advertising, and lobbying showed some interesting trends. Most public relations research activities occurred in Washington and New York, although there were two instances of media monitoring each in Los Angeles and Houston. Public relations counsel or management was used as a term by public relations practitioners mostly in three major cities: New York (56%), Washington (17%), Los Angeles (22%). Washington provided 92% of the policy counsel. So, taking into account the limitations of the data, once could summarize that enactment of the public relations manager role mostly occurred in Washington and New York.

Technician tasks were more distributed throughout the United States. The number of registrant locations totaled 18 for promotion, 17 for public speaking, 16 for collateral materials, 15 for conference/trade show participation, eight for newsletters/magazines, and five for audio-visual tactics. Nine locations were listed for publicity but more than a third of publicity tactics were handled in New York, perhaps a factor of its major media center status in addition to the public relations expertise available there.

Washington-based registrants were responsible for 88% of the lobbying and 40% of liaison activities. Registrants in six other markets listed liaison activities; 28% were in New York and the rest contributed small levels of the activities.

Public Relations Models

One cannot reach firm conclusions about models of public relations in practice by practitioners, given these data. However, the analysis suggests that the press agentry (promotion) model diminished slightly in the last part of the century while the public information model remained strong. Evidence of two-way communication began in the 1970s and was enacted more broadly in the 1980s. There is no evidence to suggest two-way symmetric relations in any volume; listings suggest a more self-interested asymmetric model. Although one presumes negotiating took place in Mexico's efforts to lobby, FARA listings provide no illumination of details. In addition, the "personal influence" model discerned in Grunig et al. (1995) deserves attention because of the growth of lobbying and liaison activities and the increased dependency on Washington-based practitioners. FARA registrations were replete with suggestions of personal influence used with lawmakers and U.S. government agency officials, rather than personal influence with media as observed by Grunig et al. (1995).

The Client: From State to Marketplace

Tourism Public Relations

Perhaps it was a reaction to the Lopez Portillo administration's actions in the late 1980s or a manifestation of the dizzy commercial pace of the Reagan years, but Mexico's public relations in the 1980s transformed from mostly government-based to business-oriented clients.

Throughout the five decades, Mexico's central government funded tourism-related communication activities including public relations and advertising. (The names of the federal government tourism agency changed during the period but included tourism ministry, tourism office, tourism department, and the like.) This central government effort climbed from two percent in the 1940s, four percent in the 1950s, 12% in the 1960s, to 50% in the 1970s. But in the 1980s, federal government tourism PR (number of listings mentioning) dropped to 29%.

In addition to using the services of U.S. public relations firms (and some sole proprietors), the Mexican government set up tourism offices in major cities beginning in the 1960s and by the mid-1980s they reached tourists in 15 U.S. cities. However, by 1987 only three tourism offices were left (New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles). The communication focus on individual travelers and travel agents switched to real estate developers and other investors during this period, and firms like Carl Byoir and Associates and later Hill & Knowlton (when it purchased Byoir assets in 1986) planned and implemented public relations programming aimed at prospective business partners in Mexican development. Mexico localities launched communication activities not only aimed at building tourism, but at increasing U.S. investment, such as public relations for the state of Chihuahua in 1986. Positive references to Mexico as an investment location are scattered throughout the later decade. For instance, in 1991, Fleishman Hillard reported being engaged in "activities aimed at highlighting Mexico's opening economy and increasing foreign investment."

Mexican railroads also engaged in tourism public relations. In addition to providing information about railway schedules and freight rates to U.S. entities, they also distributed information to travelers. Four percent of all 940 listings mentioned the railroad. Mexican Railways' public relations was relatively evenly distributed throughout the five decades of listings, although there were none for 1990-91.

Individual states and cities supplemented centralized travel boosterism with similar trends. First appeared U.S. public relations for former President Migel Aleman's pet project, Acapulco. This was followed a few years later by public relations for Yucatan, Cancun, Ixtapa, Cozumel, and Nuevo Leon. In 1985, for instance, Hill & Knowlton arranged for department store catalog fashion photography in Cancun, Leon, and Ixtapa. (This was the first example in FARA of using fashion to promote Mexico.) Forty-four percent of such local government-sponsored activities were in the 1970s, 32% were in the 1980s, and minor mention is made in other decades.

Tourism public relations was also conducted on behalf of specific hotel chains and resorts. Forty-three percent of the listings for hotel public relations were in the 1980s; the rest were generally evenly distributed throughout the other decades. Beginning in the 1950s, tourism public relations was also conducted on behalf of Mexican airlines; later Aeromexico is specifically named. Fifty-four percent of Mexican airline communications were clustered in the 1970s, 26% in the 1980s, and the remainder before 1970.

In short, by 1980, Mexican tourism public relations switched from mostly federal government-based to city/state-based and business-based. (This statement needs a caveat, because depending on the era, some Mexican businesses public/private distinctions are not clear.) in addition, federal budgets allocated for tourism and tourism investment remained robust but the Mexican government began to rely more heavily on large U.S. consultancies to help with these objectives rather than staff its own tourism offices throughout the United States.

Business and Trade Association Public Relations

The unfolding of non-government public relations is better viewed in the growth of public relations for non-tourism-related Mexican companies. Out of the 75 listings for businesses, fewer than three percent were in the 1950s, fewer than three percent in the 1960s, 15% in the 1970s, 60% in the 1980s, and 20% in 1990-1991 (which suggests an upward trend). Non-food-related trade associations and chambers of commerce were busiest in the 1980s, too, with 40% of their activity in this decade. Four percent of trade association/chambers of commerce public relations were listed in the 1940s, 18% in the 1950s, 8% in the 1960s, 21% in the 1970s, 40% in the 1980s, and 9% in 1990-91. Examples included the steel, cement, railway car, beer, cigarette, plywood, and textile industries.

Trade, import quotas, tariffs, and duties were critical issues for Mexico in the 1980s as it pulled away from the isolationist business policies of Lopez Portillo. Revamping of the General System of Preferences (GSP) in the early 1980s, GATT discussions, the 1984 Multi-Fiber Agreement (textiles) and the NAFTA-related jockeying in the early 1990s meant high-stakes public relations and lobbying activities for Mexican businesses. In 1990-91 U.S. tax laws became another bureaucratic matter of concern. Mexican companies and groups also were engaged in lobbying related to proposed natural resource legislation in the 1980s.

The Mexican government's commerce/industrial development ministry (names changed over the decades) began public relations and lobbying efforts in the 1970s, with 42% taking place in the 1980s. Likewise, 60% of the finance/credit ministry's communications was in the 1980s, perhaps because of U.S. acceptance of well-regarded finance ministers like Jésus Silva Herzog. Anecdotally, and maybe a sign of the high-tech age, by the mid-1980s, FARA listings were full of acronyms. Not only did U.S. firms adopt acronyms (e.g., Dancer Fitzgerald Scott adopting DFS), but Mexican organizations started using acronyms (e.g., SECTUR, FONATUR).

Other Public Relations

Mexico's commodities generally have been coveted by its Northern neighbors, sometimes serving as a bargaining chip, like during World War II when the United States experienced food shortages. At other times competing U.S. entities (e.g., flower/fruit/vegetable growers) challenged Mexican growers exporting to the United States.

Public relations for agriculture and livestock began in the 1950s, with 15% of this communication occurring in the decade, 13% in the 1960s, 46% in the 1970s, and 26% in the 1980s. Public relations for coffee, sugar, livestock, and vegetable groups were long-standing. The New York-based Pan American Coffee Bureau worked for years on Mexico's behalf (and for other international producers). In addition to periodic "dumping" accusations about agricultural products, in 1989-1990 Mexico communicated with the Environmental Protection Agency related to EPA concerns about pesticides and residue on Mexican bell peppers and fruits. Although petroleum was discovered in Mexico in the mid-1970s, thirty-five percent of the public relations and lobbying related to Mexican oil and minerals was conducted in the 1980s. This probably is because of oil's role in getting the U.S. and the International Monetary Fund to continue to finance Mexico's post-Echeverría and post-Portillo disastrous economy, and the discovery later in the 1980s that reserve volumes were not quite had been promised. Four percent were in the 1940s, 26% in the 1950s, 22% in the 1960s, and 13% in the 1970s.

Non-profits were largely absent from the listings, given their general exemption from FARA requirements. The first FARA mention of U.S. public relations for a Mexican university was in 1985. A few years later, in 1990-91, TKC International of Washington, D.C. contacted groups in the United States regarding student-teacher exchanges, loans, purchases of equipment, and other topics on behalf of five Mexican universities.

Show Us the Money

While FARA listings are no indicator of total funds spent of Mexican public relations they portray some trends. Most contracts were 12-month agreements. Although the exact number of months and dollar amount reported was coded by the researcher, to simplify analysis budgets were grouped into $24,000 or less (approximately a $2k per month retainer for 12-month budgets), $24,001-$60,000, $60,001-$120,000, $120,001-$240,000, and more than $240,000. Organizations did not report budgets in the 1940s, only the Mexican government and a few other agencies reported budgets in the 1950s and 1960s, and just one-quarter of the 1970s listing included contract amounts. Of those reporting in the 1970s, the biggest contract category (mode) was $24,000 and under. In the 1980s, two-thirds of the listings included a contract amount, and the mode was $24,001-$60,000. In 1990-91, 96% of organizations reported budgets, and the most frequent category (mode) was more than $240,000.

What communications activities were associated with larger budgets? The mode for environmental scanning/legislative scanning was $24,000 and under, but media research and monitoring U.S. media's mode was the $240,000-plus category. The mode for policy counsel was under $24,000, but $240,000 and up was the mode for publicity/media relations, newsletters/magazines, and producing/distributing collateral materials. The mode for lobbying was $24,000 and under, but for liaison activities it was more than $240,000. In short, "traditional" public relations commanded bigger budgets than lobbying and legislative-related matters, at least through 1991.

What was Missing?

Although much of 1940s-1980s media coverage of Mexico focused on problems like student repression, immigration. and drugs (e.g., Bailey, 1989; Laiches, 1980s), the FARA reports show few public relations activities aimed at changing U. S. public opinion on these topics. The Immigration Control Act of 1982 garnered some public relations programming and lobbying. In addition, Mexico received counsel about OAS testimony in the mid 1980s. In 1983 the Mexican government paid for updates about U.S. positions on El Savador, Central America, and the Carribean, allowing us to see that Mexico did care about U.S. positions in the region, even though Mexico and the U.S. sometimes differed on Latin American policy and support of various regimes.

Although individual businesses and trade groups paid for counsel, scanning, and lobbying related to NAFTA the only clear pro-NAFTA public relations campaign was Edelman's 1991 work. In 1991 Marsteller created a War on Drugs advertising campaign and companion press kit. Otherwise, hot media topics for Mexico did not surface in the FARA reports. Media coverage and public relations efforts were not intertwined the way this researcher had anticipated they would be.

Conclusions and Discussion

In summary, four trends were observed in FARA registrations about Mexico in five decades. First, there was a shift from publicity, promotion, and production of controlled tools to more counseling and personal influence. But publicity and media relations remained strong throughout and continued to command big budgets. The technician roles were jostled by the managerial roles, but the technicians stayed in the game.

Second, as Mexico focused more on business development and business lobbying, public relations increasingly became centralized in the Northeastern United States. In addition, New York lost some ground to Washington as public affairs increased in importance. Public relations and advertising efforts were more likely to involve the big players (Hill & Knowlton, Marsteller, Saatchi & Saatchi, etc.) in the 1980s. Budgets grew.

Third, the focus on a mostly retail target public – potential tourists – was expanded. New publics included other businesses, Washington influentials, and members of Congress. In the late 1980s there was lots of contact with a variety of government agencies, not just legislators.

Fourth, the clients who were served changed from mostly tourism and agriculture-related (1940s-60s), to oil & minerals (1970s and beyond), to other raw materials and manufacturing (especially in the 1980s). NAFTA discussions were a boon for U.S. public relations and public affairs consultancies as Mexican companies and the government engaged in lobbying efforts.

Other observations make a leap from the data. First, a concern from reviewing the listings was the plunge into lobbying and public affairs by some Mexican government entities without enough foundation-building by public relations practitioners first. Perhaps efforts to create general public opinion support were generated directly from Mexico, or perhaps Mexican organizations realized that the U.S. public (and media, according to the Aguayo, Bailey, Laiches studies mentioned earlier) is apathetic about most policy-making. It looked like Mexico left the public out of public opinion and went straight to government agencies and lawmakers. This is because organizations dealt mostly with business/commercial policy matters rather than topics like drugs. Consequently, then, the U.S. public lost out on an image of Mexico as comprised of strategic, savvy, organizations – the Mexico that emerges from the FARA documents.

Second, with the exception of the tourism campaigns and a few agriculture-related clients like sugar and coffee, most public relations efforts were more short-term than long-term. Many clients floated to the surface with the tides of proposed policy changes and then disappeared. This does not bode well for overall relationship-building and proactive, rather than reactive, programming.

Third, the overall impression from reviewing the documents is how the nature of bilateral relations became increasingly bureaucratic and legalistic in the 1980s. What communication noise and distractions in the communication channels! Perhaps this was because of the orientation of the new U.S.-university-trained "technocrats" in the de la Madrid administration;

maybe it was the nature of the increasingly legalistic U.S. society. In our bilateral history, Mexico has accused the United States of military/political imperialism (pre-World War II) and cultural imperialism (1970s). But the 1980s-era United States could be accused of legal imperialism, or "paperclip imperialism." Facing a myriad of bureaucratic hoops to understand and negotiate; Mexico was forced to rely on lawyers to understand and lobbyists to try to get around U.S. minutia. This may place increasing burdens on U.S. practitioners practicing international public relations to become more savvy about such legal and financial details.

Finally, there is a gap between what the media covered (in the 1980s, especially), and what public relations practitioners and lobbyists were up to. Public relations efforts focused on making more money for the country and attracting investment, not their overall image or extended relations with U.S. citizenry. "The public be damned," as an industrialist in another boom era said. Although there is evidence that the Mexican government approached the media directly earlier in the century to complain about negative stereotypes (Johnson 1999), there is little post-World War II evidence of Mexican efforts to decrease negative coverage about immigration and drugs. History shows that Mexico in these decades had too many other concerns.

Given the hindsight of history, was the Mexico-US relationship enhanced via public relations counsel and/or programming? This study cannot answer that question, although it indicates that communications expertise helped serve Mexico's goals. Building a more equal partner, as U.S. public relations may have assisted Mexico in becoming, may be the first step in ethical relationship building.

Future research would be enhanced by systematic study of consultant's archives, other case studies, and in-depth interviews with Mexican clients and U.S. practitioners.

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Appendix One

MEXICO IN MOTION PUBLIC RELATIONS/LOBBYING CODE SHEET
Foreign Agents Registration Act Filings for Mexico

Year ____________________ **Registration Number** ________________________

Registrant (PR person/firm)

Location of Registrant 1. Washington, DC 2. New York 3. Chicago 4. Austin 5. Dallas 6.El Paso 7.Houston 8. San Antonio 9. San Francisco 10. Los Angeles/Beverly Hills 11. San Diego 12. Phoenix 13. Tuscon 14. Santa Fe 15. Denver 16. St. Louis 17. New Orleans 18. Miami 19. Orlando 20. Other Florida Location 21. Other Texas Location 22. Other California Location 23. Other Colorado/New Mexico/Arizona Location
24.Other Location ____

Name of Mexican Client
(Foreign Principal) ____

Contract Amount $ ____________________________ 99. None Reported

Time Period 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 months Other ____ months
99. None Reported

Nature of Agency (check all that apply, 0-1 coding)

1__________ Office of the President of Mexico
2__________ Government of Mexico, Commerce/Industrial Development Ministry
3__________ Government of Mexico, Ministry of Finance/Credit
4__________ Government of Mexico, Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Department, etc.
5__________ State, Regional, or City of Mexico Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Department, etc
6__________ Government of Mexico, Ministry of Transportation and Communication
7__________ Government of Mexico, Ministry of Transportation ONLY
8__________ Government of Mexico, Foreign Relations Ministry
9__________ Government of Mexico, Other
10__________ Mexican Candidate Running for Political Office
11__________ Mexican Railroads
12__________ Mexican Oil and/or Minerals
13__________ Mexican Agriculture, inc. agricultural associations (coffee, avocados, etc.)
14__________ Mexican Manufacturing Company
15__________ Mexican Hotel or Resort (specific properties or chains)
16__________ Mexican Tourism & Travel (private/non hotel-specific)
17__________ Mexican Company other than above
18__________ Mexican Trade Association ________________________ industry
19__________ Mexican Chamber of Commerce
20__________ Mexican Labor Organization
21__________ Union Nacional Sinarquista, Mexico
22__________ Other (name)

____

Activities (0/1 check as many as apply)

RESEARCH

__________ Monitor US media; media research
__________ Perform communications audit
__________ Monitor websites, Internet
__________ Conduct legal, legislative, regulatory research or environmental scanning
__________ Conduct other research, data analysis

COUNSEL/ADVISE

__________ Provide PR counsel/PR management
__________ Provide Policy counsel/Government relations
__________ Provide Financial counsel/Investor relations
__________ Provide Legal counsel

IMPLEMENTATION

__________ Disseminate "propaganda"
__________ Publicity & media relations, press releases, feature stories, media photos, etc.
__________ Public relations (unspecified)
__________ Promotion (unspecified)
__________ Advertising (specified or unspecified)
__________ Media training
__________ Speaker training
__________ Produce/distribute newsletters & magazines (regular schedule of publication)
__________ Prepare/distribute collateral materials (brochures, booklets, posters, fact sheets, etc.)
__________ Develop mailing/contact lists
__________ Special events plan/implement (incl sporting events or conferences)
__________ Exhibit and/or produce photographs, slide shows, videos, motion pictures, other media-based exhibits (includes creation of exhibits, arrangements, etc.)
__________ Exhibit art & handicrafts
__________ Sponsorships, community participation opportunities, community relations
__________ Attend conferences, trade shows, seminars on client's behalf
__________ Public speaking or speaker's bureau activities (arrange engagements, write speeches, deliver speeches on client's behalf)
__________ Fundraising (solicit donations, members, & membership dues)
__________ Political lobbying (meet with senators, congressional aids, US government agency officials, etc.)
__________ Liaison (other liaison activities)
__________ Provide sales assistance, selling or marketing agent
__________ Provide purchasing assistance
__________ Write/produce annual report
__________ Create websites

List Others:

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Toward and Inclusive Trajectory of Public Relations History: The Contributions of W.E.B. Du Bois to Nonprofit Public Relations Before the Crisis and Beyond

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Toward an Inclusive Trajectory of Public Relations History: The Contributions of W.E.B. Du Bois to Nonprofit Public Relations Before the Crisis and Beyond

This research argues for the inclusion of African American scholars and publicity practitioners that predate the traditional public relations timeline beginning with Edward Bernays in 1923. Specifically, it is through the case study approach and implementation of archival research that an argument is made to closely examine the merit of incorporating W.E.B. Du Bois and his work with the NAACP into public relations history.

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The national trade association for public relations professionals, the Public Relations Society of America, acknowledges to the lack of diversity in the field. According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics the percentage of practitioners claiming minority ethnic status is under the national population average of 12 percent. Answers to the lack of interest by college students and the longevity of professionals of color may be found in the missing voices of public relations history.

This research argues for the inclusion of African American scholars and publicity practitioners that predate the traditional public relations timeline beginning with Edward Bernays in 1923. Specifically, it is through the case study approach and implementation of archival research that an argument is made to closely examine the merit of incorporating W.E.B. Du Bois and his work with the NAACP into public relations history. Acknowledgement of African American contributions and careful analysis of successful use of public relations tactics in the major periods in American history including African American liberation in the early twentieth century is required. This is the only way people of color will be able to see themselves as important to and an integral part of the public relations field. Choices to omit and ignore important periods in the American experience and relegate them to footnote status must be eliminated. An initial look at the work of W.E.B. Du Bois and the National Association for Colored People begins to pull back the curtain of omission that remains.

In 1909 the two primary races in America, Blacks and Caucasians, were living in disparate worlds. According to Charles Kellogg in his book, *NAACP*, the "public opinion in the North, was apathetic and indifferent to the problems of the Negro. . .The North was willing to leave the solution of these problems to the South, and the South had entrenched itself behind legislation that assured the dominance of the Anglo-Saxon Southern society, with the Negro firmly in his place at the bottom."[1] After the death of Fredrick Douglass in 1895 the mantle of Black leadership, particularly in the eyes of Whites, passed to Booker T. Washington.[2] As the nation moved through one of its most tumultuous periods post-Reconstruction, several organizations commanded the attention of America. Issues of race and segregation were on the minds of the masses. At the center of the discussion were two men, Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois. In the pages of the Black press and in a limited fashion among the mainstream dailies and weeklies, the issues of the color-line and the place of African Americans were being addressed as both formal and informal public relations strategy.

A 1895 speech given during the Atlanta Cotton Exposition, solidified Washington's place as the heir to Frederick Douglass' leadership. This speech outlined his plan for African Americans to exist separate from Whites. His speech implored the use of separate fingers on the hand as a metaphor for race relations. While the country turned this ideology over in its collective conscience, W.E.B. Du Bois continued to study the race problem from a distance with the precision and diligence that produced his essay, "The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870."[3] This work increased Du Bois name recognition and afforded him the opportunity to continue his academic career at Atlanta University in 1897. For the next twelve years, Du Bois would study and teach in virtual isolation. Students from Wilberforce and Atlanta University recalled him walking across campus with gloves and a cane focused on that day's issue and not engaging them in small talk or any other pleasantries of the day. Du Bois rarely met with students after class and asked questions to students in a limited fashion. He lectured the majority of the class period, in a monotonous drone. But despite his lack of dynamism his students adored him and determined it an honor to be among his students at the University.[4]

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[1] Charles Kellogg. *NAACP: A History of the NAACP*. (Baltimore, 1967), 4.

[2] Armistead Pride and Clint Wilson *A History of the Black Press* (Washington, 1997),119.

During his time in Atlanta, Du Bois came to know the residual sting of southern racism like a slap across the face. It was during the period from 1896 to 1899 that the weight and consequences of the plight of Blacks pulled Du Bois from his work and literally into the streets. In his autobiography, Du Bois described the lynching of farmer in Atlanta as the "red ray" that forced him to begin to turn from his work. Sam Hose was lynched after he shot and killed a white farmer over a debt. The black farmer's body was burned and portions of his flesh were place on display in a store in downtown Atlanta. Du Bois at once drafted a letter and planned to deliver it to the major newspaper in the community. After settling in his mind to take the correspondence to the paper, Du Bois' planned to avenge the man's death with the pen.

His plan was however, short -lived. As Du Bois headed into downtown, he saw the Black farmer's knuckles hanging in white storeowner's window and he retreated back to the campus. He never sent the letter. Later recalling that incident in a list of horrors against the Black community, Du Bois began to doubt the demand for scientific work. Du Bois received publishing credits for his sociological research on the slave trade, in addition to his quantification and qualification of the Black experience in the nation's

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[3] Lewis, *Biography of A Race*, 155. "Suppression" was Du Bois' published dissertation and served as his official entry into the national and later international dialogue on race. An initial launch of his role as authority on the African American.

[4] Lewis, *Biography of A Race*, 198.

urban centers, The epidemic lynchings that culminated with the display of Sam Hose were enough to move the scholar from studying the race problem to mobilizing the leaders in the Black community to organize and address the problem.

Following the Hose incident, Du Bois continued to critique Washington's position in published articles and a chapter in his most influential work, *The Souls of Black Folk*, is titled, "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others." Describing Washington's theory of reconciliation and accommodation encouraged between White and Black men, Du Bois warns:

> ". . .if that reconciliation is to be marked by the industrial slavery and civic death of those same black men, with permanent legislation into a position of inferiority, then those black men, if they are really men, are called upon by every consideration of patriotism and loyalty to oppose such a course by all civilized methods, even though such opposition involves disagreement with Mr. Booker T. Washington. We have no right to sit silently by while the inevitable seeds are sown for a harvest of disaster to our children, black and white."[5]

Later, in his autobiography, Du Bois refers to Washington's accommodationist view as an "acquiescence in second-class citizenship on the part of the Negro people in return for white support of vocational education and assurance of more or less menial employment."[6] Washington captured the admiration of Whites with his offer that "in all things that are purely social we can be separate as the five fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to human progress." As this speech was reprinted in its entirety and excerpts circulated across the nation and abroad.[7]

It was in direct opposition to the Atlanta speech that WE.B. Du Bois launched his career and began the journey from scholar of the Negro problem to promoter of the race as a propagandist and public relations practitioner. According to Lewis, it was literally the move from Atlanta in 1909 to New York that represented a turning point in Du Bois career "leading from science to propaganda."[8]

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[5] W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk.* (1903; rpt. edn., New York, 1953), 51.

[6] W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century*, (9th edition, London, 1986), 428.

The "red ray" coupled with growing intensity surrounding the perceived controversy between he and Booker T. Washington made his work at Atlanta University increasingly difficult. Fundraising served a major hindrance for Du Bois' work in Atlanta. Due to Washington's success in entrenching the African American southern higher education curriculum with an industrial and agricultural perspective Du Bois brand of intelligence was finding opposition. The momentum of the Tuskegee Machine influenced White philanthropists who were aware of Du Bois' dissatisfaction with the Washington program and unwilling to fund his mission of Black higher educational empowerment.[9]

The manner in which Du Bois heeded the call of the race problem – challenging the Jim Crow South and more subtle oppression in the North demands acknowledgement from academic disciplines and schools beyond African American History. It is Du Bois' ability to combine research, media relations and strategic collaboration that require attention from public relations scholarship. More than seventy-five years after the canonization of the public relations field in Edward Bernays', *Cyrstallizing Public Opinion*, there remain missing voices in the recording of the field's development and expansion —one of the most prolific voices in the throng was that of WE.B Du Bois.[10]

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[7] Pride and Wilson, *A History of the Black Press*, 119.
[8] David L. Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race. 1868-1919.* (New York, 1993), 408.
[9] Du Bois, *Soliloquy*, 223.
[10] Edward Bernays, *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (1923; rpt. edn., New York, 1961). According to Bernays the field of public relations developed from the work of government agencies during both world wars and he attributes the majority of the success in the field to the development of the public relations professional from publicity agent to counselor and advisor.

Writers point to the fact that the voices of public relations are inherently American and come from America's experiences. Authors cite the American Revolution, the challenges of migration as well as the trials and tribulations of inter and intraethnic diversity as opportunities to employ public relations. According to the British author, Bill Malinson in his work, *Public Issues and Private Truths: An Anatomy of Public Relations*, the field of public relations is uniquely American and has been exported to other countries.[11] In America, according to Malinson, the use of public relations can be traced back to the American Revolutionary period of 1776, when the message of freedom was disseminated in pamphlets across the New World. Similar to Malinson, American historians often tie the origins of public relations to journalistic beginnings. Several scholars position the field of public relations as a response to the "muckracking" as a defense of big corporate interests—often providing detailed accounts of corporate public relations techniques that minimize the effort of publicity bureaus and press agents.[12] These descriptions of the field paint an evolutionary picture wherein the infantile origins of public relations are characterized as publicity driven and lacking the research and depth characteristic of the counseling role that later evolved after the craft was fine tuned during America's first and second World Wars. The work of the Creel Commission in World War I and Office of War Information (OWI) in World War II are given space in the textbooks and have been analyzed in published articles.[13] The preoccupation with the work of war public relations also bears some of the load in limiting the historical perspective to personal narratives and have contributed to efforts that "choke" off other examples of the use of public relations in social movements. In fact it is in the absence of varying and diverse perspectives that public relations history marginalizes the work of successful organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the work of practitioners like W.E.B. Du Bois.

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[11] Bill Malinson, *Public Issues and Private Truths: An Anatomy of Public Relations* (New York, 1996).

[12] Dennis L. Wilcox, Phillip H. Ault, Warren K. Agee, Glen T. Cameron *Essentials of Public Relations* (New York, 2001); Richard S. Tedlow *Keeping the Corporate Image: Public Relations and Business, 1900-1929* (Baltimore, 1968); Karen S. Miller *The Voice of Business* (Chapel Hill, 1999).

[13] Wilcox, *Essentials of Public Relations*, 32-35; Bruce Pinkleton, "The Campaign of the Committee on Public Information: Its Contributions to the History and Evolutions of Public Relations," *Journal of Public Relations Research* 6 (March 1994): 229-240.These provide two examples of thorough historical descriptions of public relations history from the war effort. Both reflect the connotation of the field as evolutionary and ever progressing toward the counsel ideal.

It appears that organizational success in public relations that occurred before 1923 has not been incorporated into the public relations historical periodization model nor do any of the histories of the field include the work of historically marginalized like African Americans. Since 1994, Susan Henry and Karen Miller have contributed to public relations' early history with narrative accounts of Doris Fleischman and Jane Stewart, respectively. These accounts insert diverse perspectives of the field through a genderized lens, but a void still remains. Linda Childers Hon made cursory strides toward uncovering the impact of public relations in social movement history in her article, "To Redeem the Soul of America: Public Relations and the Civil Rights Movement.[14] Both of these recent works still miss the mark in allowing the African American historical experience to speak to the successful use of public relations.

An examination of the dual strategy of face-to-face meetings and correspondence that laid the groundwork for Du Bois' subsequent public relations efforts is necessary. David Levering Lewis, the most celebrated Du Bois biographer calls attention to public relations in describing Du Bois' efforts in 1899 to block the passing of legislation endorsing grandfather clauses and deceptive educational qualifications prohibiting African American voting rights. This lobbying effort represented a rare moment of collaboration between Du Bois and Booker T. Washington. Lewis writes, "As the state's powerful Bourbon forces mobilized to oppose the redneck radicalism behind the bill, he [Washington] and Du Bois worked parallel lobbying and public-relations strategies."[15] Both men called on influential legislators in written correspondence and held meetings to influence the block of the discriminatory voting policies.

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[14] Linda Childers Hon "'To Redeem the Soul of America: Public Relations and the Civil Rights Movement,'" *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 9 (March, 1997): 163-212. Hon describes, in great detail, the work of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the public relations staff of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Prior to Lewis' passing identification of Du Bois' early public relations efforts, Elliott Rudwick brings attention to Du Bois role as propagandist in his work, *W.E.B. Du Bois: Propagandist of the Negro Protest*. This history chronicles Du Bois' dual role as spokesperson and researcher with the NAACP. Du Bois often referred to his work with the NAACP as propaganda. This term was originally embraced by the public relations field prior to disappointments in World War I. Following the war the term became connotative and pejorative. According to public relations scholars the term remains an integral part of the public relations function if defined neutrally. Du Bois' work as propagandist impacted his effectiveness in orchestrating the success of *The Crisis*.

The majority of scholarly research on Du Bois before and during the earliest years of the NAACP stop short in bridging the gap between Du Bois as public relations practitioner and Black liberator. However, close readings of Du Bois' correspondence from 1900 to 1910 provide evidence that the success of Du Bois' tenure as Director of Publicity and Research for the NAACP was in fact deft execution public relations strategy. The alliances created with White dailies and magazines and the convening of conferences to discuss the Negro problem were part of long term plans made and practiced on a smaller scale.[16] These strategies over the next eleven years from 1899 – 1910 culminate in the founding of the NAACP in 1909 and the launch of the house organ, *The Crisis,* in November, 1910.

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[15] Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: The Biography of a Race, 1868-1919*, (New York:1993).

As early as 1904, Du Bois corresponds with Richard Jones, the editor of *Collier's Weekly* regarding the inclusion of a regular column titled, "Along the Color Line," or Voices of the Darker Millions." Jones writes:

> "I appreciate very much the courtesy of your letter of January 30th. I am afraid it will not be possible, with the wide demands that press for space in our pages, to conduct a regular column or half column on "Along the Color Line", or "Voices of the Darker Millions". I wish very much indeed, however, that you would try to make it possible to give me an editorial thought of about 500 words in length on the idea you suggest – the color line belting the world today and the growing interests that are centering therein."

Six years later a significant portion of each issue of *The Crisis* is dedicated the department referred to as "Along the Color Line." Du Bois' use of correspondence with white publishers to open up a dialogue about race that was not fully engaged in until his monthly response in *The Crisis*. Prior to securing his position with the NAACP, Du Bois was able to successfully use the mainstream press to combat the disenfranchisement of African Americans with public relations techniques and media relations efforts beyond the academic documentation of Black life found in sociological studies on the Negro problem. With a national platform in the pages of publications including *Atlantic*

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[16] Rudwick, *W.E.B Du Bois: Propagandist of the Negro Protest* (New York: 1968); Apthecker, *The Correspondence of W.E.B. Du Bois*, (Boston, 1973); Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: The Biography of a Race, 1868-1919*, (New York:1993).

Monthly, Dial, World Today and *The Independent* Du Bois became a leading spokesman and propagandist for the race.[17]

With the demands of success, came the surge of the Tuskegee Machine. Du Bois was experiencing internal conflict between his respect of Washington as a leader of the race and his intellectual conflict with the Washington philosophy. Washington's supporters were aware of Du Bois' attitude and made attempts to bring the perceived 'enemy' into the fold, by offering him positions with Tuskegee. Du Bois met with members of Tuskegee's Board of Trustees and Washington.[18] The interviews with Washington were "disappointing," according to Du Bois, despite this fact Washington invited him to attend a meeting of colored and white friends in New York. This meeting marked the creation of the Committee of Twelve in 1904, which included Du Bois and Washington in positions of leadership. After the meeting, Du Bois became increasingly "disillusioned."[19] The group was unable to do any effective work as a steering committee because it was financed by Washington, which put control of the group in his hands. Du Bois resigned soon after it was created.

The disappointment of the Machine's control of national organizing efforts was intensified through the pages of the Black press. The publication of the *Boston Guardian* by the Monroe Trotter and George Forbes served as the voice of the younger set eager to critique Washington's industrialist ideals. The publication marked one of the initial public attacks against Washington, when it began publishing in 1901. Its editorial page included "venomous onslaughts against [Washington] and his policies."[20] The conflict with Trotter and Washington escalated in 1903 during a lecture in Boston. Trotter and Forbes were in the audience during a Washington lecture and attempted to have him answer questions. Some characterized the confrontation as "a group of radicals led by Trotter."[21] The police were called and Trotter spent a month in jail. Du Bois contended he had no prior knowledge of the incident. But his summer plans that year included a stay at the Trotter home and during that time and as a result of his frustration, he prepared the call for participation in what would eventually become the Niagra Movement in 1905.[22]

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[17] Lewis, *Biography of a Race*, 704. For a comprehensive list of Du Bois' articles published prior to and during the earliest years of *The Crisis* see W.E.B. Du Bois papers at the University of Massachusetts Library, Amherst (microfilm edition), reel 83.
[18] Du Bois, *Soliloquy*, 244.
[19] Ibid, 247.

The call was made in July 1905 for those who wished to "oppose firmly present methods of strangling honest criticism; to organize intelligent and honest Negroes; and to support organs of news and public opinion."[23] Fifty-nine black men from seventeen different states answered the call and the Niagra Movement forged ahead from a hotel in Niagra Falls, New York.

Buoyed by the moral support of the members of the Niagra Movement and in response to criticism, Du Bois continued to publish widely. He began to circulate a prospectus for the publication that would become *The Moon Illustrated Weekly* in 1905. The description of the magazine is familiar to those who know *The Crisis*. In the Du Bois manuscript holdings handwritten notes entitled, "A Proposed Negro Journal," describe the publication that would initially become *The Moon*. Du Bois justified the need for the publication based on the fact that:

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[20] Pride and Wilson, *History of Black Press*, 123.
[21] Marable, 50
[22] Kellogg, 9
[23] Du Bois, Soliloquy, 248

> The present is a very critical time for the American Negro and for the darker races in general. It is not simply a question of individual ability but of group cooperation [to] initiate forward movement in culture and social reform and to repel unjust attack. To stimulate this cooperation wide self-knowledge within the race, of its own needs and accomplishments is demanded; and certain ideals, racial and cultural must be brought home to the rank and file. A proper journal would be the first step toward these ends.[24]

He proposed to establish a journal "on the order of *Harper's Weekly* or *Collier's*, but smaller in the number of pages. . ."[25] The journal he described in detail, *The Moon*, was published for a year in Tennessee and the editor secured new collaborators from 1907 to 1910 to publish the *Horizon: A Journal of the Color Line* from Washington, D.C. Both publications were similar in size and scope to *The Crisis*. The tasks of editing, writing, and business management absorbed the majority of Du Bois time prior to leaving Atlanta.

In addition to promoting the race in print, Du Bois worked feverishly to keep The Niagra Movement on course. It continued to hold meetings and held conferences yearly from 1906 to 1909. It was successful media coverage of these events that brought together the subsequent founders of the NAACP. Reporting on the event for Oswald Garrison Villard's *New York Evening Post*, was a young social worker, Mary White Ovington. Ovington's description of the conferences impressed Villard.

In 1908 a riot in Springfield, Illinois, Abraham Lincoln's birthplace, shocked the country and again brought the architects of the NAACP closer to their ultimate call to action. Ovington read about the riot in an *Independent* newspaper article by English Walling. After reading it she was so moved that she contacted Walling about a meeting.

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[24] Du Bois papers, reel 2
[25] Ibid, reel 2

Oswald Garrison Villard, nephew of early abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, wrote the call for an organization that was "an aggressive watchdog of Negro liberties."[26]

The group would meet in New York City in May 31 and June 1, 1909. Despite his enthusiastic publicity for the event, Villard was disappointed in the reaction of the New York press. The list of sixty signers to Villard's invitation represent the leading minds of the period: Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Mary Church Terrell, William Lloyd Garrison, and W.E. B. Du Bois. The name of Booker T. Washington was conspicuously absent. Washington was no stranger to these type of organizations and he was known for his ability to rouse crowds and lead mass movements. He and his White supporters, including leading philanthropists from the Carnegie family, had held similar meetings to address the Negro problem just five years earlier and produced their own Committee of Twelve.

While planning the first National Negro Conference, Villard experienced internal conflict similar to that of Du Bois regarding Washington's absence from this new organization. He wrote Washington four days prior to the event, "inviting him to attend the conference, but tactfully making it possible for him to decline."[27] Washington responded, "I fear that my presence might restrict freedom of discussion and might, also, tend to make the conference go in directions which it would not like to go."[28]

The National Negro Conference was attended by over 300 men and women of both races. Even with internal turmoil and fireworks resulting in the resignation of one of the original solicitors of the meeting, Ida Wells-Barnett, the group forged ahead. Under the leadership of the Permanent Committee of Forty, the second conference was held in

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[26] Kellogg, 14

[27] Ibid, 19.

New York in May of 1910. Du Bois accepted their offer to be the Director of Publicity and Research. His chief efforts were devoted to editing and publishing *The Crisis.* [29] Without the guarantee of salary, Du Bois turned his resignation from Atlanta University and made his way to New York City. The office space provided by Villard in the offices of the *Evening Post* created the outward semblance of a partnership between the publishing giant, the NAACP and Du Bois. As the mast head indicated, *The Crisis* was published "with the cooperation of Oswald Garrison Villard," and afforded Du Bois credibility and publishing respect by association.[30]

The first sixteen-page issue appeared in November of 1910 and sections were titled: "Along the Color Line;" "Opinion;" "Editorial;" "The NAACP;" a speech from the Second Annual Conference by the white philanthropist and NAACP national committee chairman, Moorfield Story on the Athens and Brownsville soldiers; "The Burden;" and "What to Read." For the next nine decades the themes covered in this issue would remain the hallmarks of the publication's success.

The first editorial of *The Crisis* outlined the goal for the publication that still remains evident today:

> "The object of this publication is to set forth those facts and arguments which show the danger of race prejudice, particularly as manifested to-day toward colored people. It takes its name from the fact that the editors believe that this is critical time in the history of the advancement of men . . . The policy of the Crisis is "simple and well-defined: it will be a newspaper . . . it will be a review of opinion and literature . . . it will publish a few short articles and its editorial page will stand for the rights of men, irrespective of color or race, for the highest ideals of American democracy, and for reasonable but earnest and persistent attempt to gain these rights and realize these ideals."[31]

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[28] Ibid, 19.
[29] Du Bois, 256.
[30] Lewis, 409.
[31] "Editorial," *The Crisis*, 1910: 10

When compared to the "Character of the Journal Proposed" by Du Bois in 1904, the similarities again point to Du Bois work as public relations strategist that were executed via *The Crisis*. He wrote:

> The journal is to be:
> (a) a literary digest of fact and opinion concerning the Negro in particular and all darker races.
> (b) A compendium of the news among these people gather[ed] by staff correspondents in the larger cities and centers of the U.S. and in the West Indies, West and South Africa, etc.
> (c) Interpretation of the current news of the larger world from the point of view of the welfare of the Negro
> (d) Short pertinent and interesting articles
> (e) Illustrations attempting to portray Negro life on it beautiful and interesting side.[32]

These words combined with the previous justification for the journal appear to have been borrowed in large part to create the mission of *The Crisis*. Here the issue of Du Bois' inclusion among public relations as well journalism history is crystallized. Had the editor founded another publication among other papers and magazines along the order of an Afro American, Guardian or New York Age the lofty aims of the founder would no doubt have included more attention to profit and circulation. However when examined in concert with the proposal in 1904 and *The Crisis* editorial statement of 1910 constitute Du Bois' professional commitment to uplift the race with the word and illustration of apropaganda sheet. From the beginning he may have compared his journal to *Harper's* and *Collier's,* however he knew his goals were broader and more indicative of education and information in terms of reengineering the African American image in the White mind in 1910.

Heralding back to the column he proposed to *Collier's* the editor, The "Along the Color Line" section of *The Crisis*, included brief news items from across the country. It included national political appointments of Blacks to government offices; course listings and personnel changes in the nation's Black colleges; church news; information on social uplift detailing the travels of black leaders, women's clubs, library openings and international news. In addition, science publications and medical discoveries by blacks, news about fine art openings and scholars; and a calendar events for the numerous organizations working on behalf of blacks in the early years of the twentieth century were listed. Organizations included among calendar were the United Negro Democracy, Colored Independent Political League, National Committee of the Socialist party, National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, National Association for Colored Physicians, National Colored Baptist Association, Negro Business League, Colored Elks, and the Grand United Order of the Old Fellows. *The Crisis* "estimated that nearly 12,000 people attended these various conventions."[33]

The "Opinion" section included clips from papers and magazines across the country on the topic of race. In contrast to the original rhetoric surrounding the founding of the NAACP and it original majority of Northern and Midwestern members, the "Opinion" section was one of the two standard sections to include news from the south. The other section being the "Burden," which provided narrative accounts and statistical evidence of the lynching of blacks across the south, similar to Ida B. Wells-Barnett's methods in "The Reason Why" pamphlet of 1893. Papers in the first "Opinion" section included: the *Baltimore Sun*; Charleston, S.C. *News and Courier*; *Georgia Baptist*; *The*

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[32] Du Bois papers reel 2.
[33] "Along the Color Line," *The Crisis*, 1910: 5.

Crown (Newark, N.J.); *N.Y. Sun*; *White Springs Messenger* (Florida); *N.Y. World*; *Raleigh Record* (N.C.); *Indianapolis News*; and the *Chattanooga Times*.[34]

The "Burden" section in the initial edition of The Crisis described the circumstances of the deaths of two black men one in Tennessee and the other in South Carolina. Additional anecdotal prose pieces discussed the "burden" of being black in South Carolina with segregated parks. The final installment in the "Burden" section was a statement by a White school teacher, to the mother of a black child, who was wrongfully accused of stealing: "You shouldn't mind so much. You know it is a common saying that colored people are dishonest."[35]

The final section of *The Crisis* and an inclusion for the next several decades was entitled "What to Read." The first readers of *The Crisis* were encouraged to read books on Africa and America. Some titles included: *Housekeeping in Africa*, *Slavery as it Exists Today, Liberia the Powers*, *Negro Suffrage in Maryland*, *Closing the Little Black Schoolhouse*, *Negro Property*, *Southern Question*, *Souls of White Folk*, *Chapters from My Experience*, and *With a Cargo of Black Ivory*. It is important to note that several of these publications were written by members of the Committee of Forty, and one by Booker T. Washington--*Chapters from My Experience*.[36]

This description of the publication should shed light on its ability to attract readers, doubling the printing from the first to second issue from 1,000 to 2,500 copies – as all of the first edition sold out. By 1914 the publication subscriptions reached 33,000 and the editor proclaimed he expected over 50,000 readers by 1915. As half of the subscription cost was given to the NAACP, the publication's popularity in shaping the conscience of African Americans translated to successful public relations impact the NAACP's financial outlook. Du Bois attributed the 1914 subscription figures to his speaking tour that same year, resulting in contact with 18,000 "human souls."[37]

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[34] "Opinion," *The Crisis*, 1910: 8-9.
[35] "The Burden, " *The Crisis*, 1910: 14.

The majority of scholarly research on Du Bois before and during the earliest years of the NAACP stop short in appropriation under the rubric of public relations scholarship and historicism. Du Bois' success with the application of social science research to publicity strategy demands its inclusion in public relations literature. The initial and enduring success of the NAACP is inextricably tied to work in the publicity and later publication department. Analysis of the earliest history of the NAACP is required to expand its importance beyond the Civil Rights victories in the sixties. There is much to learned from considering the challenges and milestones of an interracial organization and its leadership alongside corporate and government interests in the history and evolution of the field of public relations.

The goal of this study was to incorporate into the literature on public relations a vision of the field that is inclusive of contributions beyond large corporate interest and efforts in the world wars. This research does not call for a revision of current history, only a more complete and balanced portrayal of major events in our nation's history, which to race and integration.

Specifically this work provides evidence for incorporating the work of W.E.B. Du Bois as the NAACP Director of Publicity and Research in 1910 into public relations history pre-1923. The goals of the publication that germinated from 1904 show Du Bois' effectiveness with public relations strategy. His plans were wrought with aims that spoke

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[36] "What to Read," *The Crisis*, 1910: 15.
[37] Circulation figures were found in David Levering Lewis, *Biography of a Race* pages 413 and 474.

beyond the creation of a journal to the freeing of a race. The combination of language and visual elements in the NAACP house organ, *The Crisis*, bear witness to his accomplishment as propagandist for the race. The circulation figures show the race wanted this mental freedom as it was portrayed in *The Crisis*. The success of the publication only further demands Du Bois consideration among public relations scholars and should serve to expand the dialogue on African Americans in the field beyond mention of public efforts of the Ku Klux Klan in 1921 and the work of White public relations professionals on behalf of Fisk and Tuskegee.[38]

There is a rich history of African American and non-profit success in public relations. It will only be after scholars adopt a paradigm of inclusivity regarding the field's earlier pioneers that current practitioners may find their own voices and build upon those existing successes.

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[38] Scott Cutlip, *The Unseen Power: Public Relations, A History* (Hillsdale, 1994).

International Paradigms: The Social Role of Brazilian Public Relations Professionals

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Abstract

This study uses factor analysis to test the construct of the "social role" of Brazilian public relations professionals, developed through an analysis of the "Latin American school of public relations." Two factors were extracted and named: (1) "Corporate Social Policies and Employee Relations" and (2) "Government and Community Relations." The purpose of the study was to add to the theoretical base of U.S. knowledge about public relations by identifying similarities between Latin American and U.S. scholarship.

International Paradigms: The Social Role of Brazilian Public Relations Professionals

I. Introduction

This study tests the first operationalization of the social role of Latin American public relations professionals through a critical analysis of the literature that promotes the "Latin American school of public relations"(Molleda, 2001a, 2001b). The study initiates a country-by-country exploration of the Latin American perspective. Here, we look at Brazil, the largest economy and territory in South America and a country with a long professional and academic public relations tradition.

Latin American scholars have previously tried to define the "ideal" and "ethical" approaches for practicing public relations in their regions. But this is the first study in which factor-analyzed indices have been used to explain what socially responsible change agents actually are in all kinds of organizations. Specifically, the study was designed to support or reject the existence of the social role of public relations professionals in Brazil. More broadly, the study was to add to the theoretical base of the U.S. body of knowledge about public relations by identifying similarities between Latin American and the U.S. scholarship (see, e.g., J. Grunig, 2000; Holtzhausen, 2000; Holtzhausen & Voto, 2002; Kruckeberg, 2000; Kruckeberg & Starck, 1988; Starck & Kruckeberg, 2001).

One encouraging consequence of the terrorist attacks inflicted against the United States and the capitalist world, in general, on September 11, 2001, could be an increased awareness of the need for collaboration among regions, nations, organizations, and communities. Public relations professionals could emerge as "social intermediaries" in the new economy (Piore, 2001), [1] in which collaboration is the core value that guides the development of relationships between organizations and their publics (J. Grunig, 2000). The social role is demanded in societies with disproportionate rates of inequality, such as found in most Latin American countries.

II. Review of the Literature

The "Latin American school of public relations": (a) focuses on the community's interest (Pereira-Parodi, 1996); (b) aims to contribute to the well-being of the human, urban, and social environments where organizations operate (Pérez-Senac & Solórzano-Hernández, 1999); (c) responds to the history and socioeconomic reality of the region (Pereira-Parodi, 1996); (d) sees public relations practitioners as agents of social transformation (Pérez-Senac, 1998) or as change agents (del Rey-Morató, 2000); (e) is embedded in the ideas of freedom, justice, harmony, equality, and respect for human dignity (del Rey-Morató, 2000; Solórzano-Hernández, 2000); (f) establishes confidence without manipulation and uses communication to reach accords, consensus, and integrated attitudes between an organization and its internal and external publics (Solórzano-Hernández, 2000); and (g) fundamentally views public relations as essential for integration (Simões, 1992) and consensus (Palenque-Suárez, 2000).

The "Latin American school of public relations" began to be promoted in the 1960s when members of the Inter-American Confederation of Public Relations (CONFIARP) initiated the study and practice of public relations according to the confederation's principles and considering the particular reality of the region. In 1996, Pereira-Parodi suggested that the Latin American school focus on the interests of the community and respond to a regional and historical reality, including economic, social, and political aspects that influence public relations practices (Pérez-Senac & Solórzano-Hernández, 1999, p. 185).

Despite the commitment of the CONFIARP members to define a distinctive school of thought, they acknowledge U.S. leadership in public relations practices and scholarship, many aspects of which are similar to the Latin American perspective. This is especially true of the work of James Grunig and his colleagues (1992) regarding symmetrical communication. However, the Latin American school of public relations is considered more humanistic and socially oriented.

Orozco-Gómez (1997) has said that from the mid-1980s to the 1990s, research efforts in Latin America began to approach the empirical tradition in the United States to a small extent. The major traditional approach has been of European orientation, anchored in social and community concerns to serve society.

CIESPAL (The International Center for Higher Studies of Communication for Latin America, Quito, Ecuador) indirectly contributed to the debate by speaking of social communication with an emphasis on "alternative media" within community groups. CONFIARP followed a different orientation by concentrating on established organizations and media for the development of a humanistic perspective of public relations. The contribution of public relations to the needed social transformation process has been promoted by established public and private organizations, with an emphasis on the needs and expectations of the involved communities. Pérez-Senac and Solórzano-Hernández (1999) have said that public relations has three main functions: administrative, communicative, and social. The administrative function refers to the management of human and financial resources and strategic plans. The communicative function entails the design, diffusion, and evaluation of messages. Finally, the social function stresses the responsibility of organizations to contribute to the well-being of the human, urban or rural, and social environments in which they operate. This social function is the core of the Latin American school of public relations.

According to del Rey-Morató (2000), the Latin American school of public relations emphasizes social and human integration; that is, from a sociological perspective, it sees the public relations professional as a change agent. del Rey-Morató noted that, according to the code of ethics and declaration of principles of CONFIARP (1986), public relations practices must be embedded in the ideas of freedom, justice, harmony, equality, and respect for human dignity. The profession's ultimate purpose is to promote social progress and well-being, to protect human rights, and to meet people's essential needs.

Solórzano-Hernández (2000)[2] stated that the common use of language is oriented primarily toward understanding. Any other language use, such as persuasive and coercive meanings, is subordinate. In the search for consensus of social integration, communication should be oriented toward overcoming mistrust. Public relations uses communication to reach consensus and integrated attitudes among specific publics that play different roles inside and outside organizations. According to Solórzano-Hernández, public relations is used to establish confidence without manipulation, where human relationships legitimize the communication efforts of organizations. Hence, human beings do not live in a world of just occasional contact, rather they live in an organized world of relationships and communication where both elements converge. Integration and coexistence are commonplace for human encounters. This is why individuals and organizations should realize that they are not self-sufficient and that they need each other for development of their individual conditions.

Pérez-Senac (1998) argued that the essence of public relations as an agent of social transformation entails "[t]he planned, systematic and permanent action of an organization to harmonize its interests with those of its publics through an acceptable behavior and an efficient communication" (p. 95). This implies that the public relations practitioner should be sensitive to social changes and understand the expectations of publics, ensuring that those expectations are met.

Latin American public relations scholars are aware of the difficulty in developing long-term relationships between organizations and publics in a region characterized by precarious social conditions. Corredor-Ruiz (2000) maintained that it is not helpful to a society to produce wealth at the same that that it is increasing poverty. According to this Venezuelan scholar, organizations face the challenge of combining three goals: quality production, social responsibility, and maintenance of cooperative links with society. Corredor-Ruiz also says that public relations professionals must contribute to their organizations' philosophy of social responsibility. This responsibility is of greater importance in Latin America than in the United States because of the failure of democratic regimes to solve their countries social crises. (Corredor-Ruiz, 1998). The slow and inefficient state bureaucracies have failed to meet the expectations of increasingly frustrated citizens, many of whom have turned to the private sector for assistance. For this reason, organizations must open channels of participation to their publics. "The main concern in Latin America is to allow publics to communicate with organizations; that is, to establish an equilibrium [symmetry] between organizations and publics" (personal interview with Corredor-Ruiz, November 24, 2000).

Changes in the environment force organizations to adapt their actions and operations to the new conditions. Palenque-Suárez (2000) argues that public relations must change, adjust, and adapt to the transformation and needs of society, including its organizations. This is not only an obligation imposed by the market, but it is also part of a true responsibility to human beings in society. She says that, today, society demands information and participation. "Public relations is conceived as essential tasks of integration and consensus, which offer to an organization the encouragement to get closer to humankind without any fear or risk" (Palenque-Suárez, 2000, p. 37).

Without distancing himself from the social perspective, Simões (1992) has defined public relations as a political function. Simões (1992) argues that an organization needs to convey

> that it exists, with permission from a granting power (government) in order to produce something or provide some service to society .... [I]t must act in benefit of all of its partners in society. Its action must be geared toward the common good and never to its own interests. There must be an integration interest. (p. 196)

Again, the "integration" theme is a key element of the concept of public relations in Latin America.

II.1. U.S. Perspective of the Social Role of Public Relations

Research on the roles of public relations practitioners is part of the discipline's body of knowledge (Toth, Serini, Wright, & Emig, 1998). Broom and Smith (1978, 1979) and Broom (1982) introduced the concept of roles to public relations. In 1992, Dozier wrote: "Roles are abstractions of behavior patterns of individuals in organizations."

Practitioners have reported performing four roles: the expert prescriber, the communication facilitator, the problem-solving process facilitator, and the communication technician (Broom, 1982; Broom & Dozier, 1986; Broom & Smith, 1979). Other than the broad categories manager and technician (Dozier, 1992), public relations practitioners seem to carry out a more specific social role, especially in developing countries (Molleda, 2001b).

Professionals acting as socially responsible agents could help define the specific characteristics of the social role. The topic of social responsibility of the public relations professional is included in the most-used introductory books (e.g., Cutlip, Center & Broom, 2000; Newsom, Turk & Kruckeberg, 2000; Wilcox, Ault, Agee & Cameron, 2000). In particular, Cutlip et al. (2000) state that the commitment to serve society must be assumed by both the professional as an individual and the profession as a collectivity. They stress that public relations fulfills its social responsibility when promoting the well-being of people and assisting social systems to adapt and respond to changing needs and environments.

Some U.S. scholars have approached the topics of social harmony and responsibility in more depth. J. Grunig and White (1992) identify the social role when explaining six definitions of the construct: pragmatic, conservative, radical, idealistic, neutral, and critical. The radical social role, which is similar to the Latin American focus, considers social improvement reform and change. They write:

> The radical worldview presupposes that public relations contributes to change, within organizations and in society. … In the wider society, public relations contributes to social change by providing information for use in public debate, by establishing links between groups is society, and by bringing resources together that can be brought to bear on the solution of social problems. (p. 52)

The last two aspects of the critical social role, establishing links and bringing resources together, have been further conceptualized by J. Grunig (2000) when he discusses the value of collaborative public relations.

> Collaboration … will help professionalize public relations, help organizations (including activist groups) serve their self-interests, and help move our democratic societies away from confrontation and divisiveness to more collaborative cultures.
>
> … At the professional level, … collaboration, collectivism, societal corporatism, and communal relationships should be at the core of what we value as a profession and what we contribute as a profession to client organizations and to society. (J. Grunig, 2000, p. 45).

These ideas concerning the role of public relations in organizations and society are at the core of the Latin American perspective.

The view of public relations professionals as change agents and organizational conscience is similar to the postmodern approach introduced by Holtzhausen (2000) and Holtzhausen and Voto (2002), which calls for integration between organizations and the voices of the powerless in society. The postmodern view is encapsulated in the following statements:

> The postmodern public relations practitioner will indeed serve as the conscience and change agent of the organization. Public relations has a role to play in challenging the dominant world views and practices of the organization when these are perceived to be unjust. The role of public relations should be to continuously demystify the organization and its practices and transform it into a more democratic institution, for both its internal and external publics. A democratic institution will consistently communicate openly with

> its publics and will be prepared to change itself in that process. (Holtzhausen, 2000, p. 105)

Similarly, Kruckeberg and Starck (1988), Kruckeberg (2000), and Starck and Kruckeberg (2001) write about an open and active relationship between "enlightened" public relations practitioners and community. "Community building can be proactively encouraged and nurtured by corporations with the guidance and primary leadership of these organizations' public relations practitioners" (Starck & Kruckeberg, 2001, p. 59). "These practitioners must consider, in their community-building efforts, their environmental constituencies, that is, all entities potentially affected by the corporations."

The views of U.S. scholars J. Grunig, Holtzhausen and Voto, and Starck and Kruckeberg inform the Latin American perspective. More importantly, however, they stress that today's complex environments call for "active" public relations professionals who will push for dynamic interactions between organizations and their internal and external publics. In Latin America, that is a very urgent need. Young democracies and great inequalities are pressuring organizations to increase their community involvement through partnerships with employees, other organizations, community groups, and local and federal government agencies.

III. Research Questions

Based on the conceptualization of the social role of public relations professionals developed by Latin American and U.S. scholars and my interpretation (2001b), the following research questions guided the study.

RQ1. *What are the dimensions that best explain the construct of "social role" of public relations professionals in Brazil?*

The operationalization of the construct social role was accomplished by developing statements that describe possible behaviors of public relations professionals in organizations. These included advising, planning, implementing, and evaluating social actions. These different functions were used for both internal and external dimensions of the construct. The exploratory factor analysis to be used will allow us to determine whether these two dimensions best describe the construct social role or if there would be subdimensions within the internal and external focuses to explain the construct.

RQ2. *Is there any difference between the enactment of the social role by male and female Brazilian professionals?*

Brazil is considered a moderately feminine society (Hofstede, 1983, 1991). The feminine feature could be related to a peaceful transition from colonialism to a federal republic and from dictatorship to democracy. Brazilians are considered less aggressive than their neighbors in South America. In general, Brazilians put relationships with people before money and value the environment. This latter fact has been emphasized since the World Environmental Summit in 1992, when Brazil became the center of biodiversity promotion and conservation.

RQ3. *Is there any difference between the enactments of the social role and the hierarchical level occupied by the Brazilian respondents?*

Brazilians are collectivistic, with high power distance embedded in their society. This combination is defined by Triandis (2002) as vertical collectivism; that is, vertical cultures accept hierarchy as a given, which is enhanced by the fact that collectivistic cultures are higher in conformity. Societies with high power distance let inequalities such as physical and intellectual capacities "grow over time into inequalities in power and health" (Hofstede, 1983, p. 81). "The latter may become hereditary and no longer related to physical and intellectual capacities at all." These characteristics are creating struggles within the Brazilian population that, since 1985, has been overcoming the repression of dictatorships and rebelling against the injustices they face.

RQ4. *Is there any difference between the enactments of the social role and the amount of professional experience of the Brazilian respondents?*

RQ5. *Is there any difference between the enactments of the social role and the amount of education of the Brazilian respondents?*

Formal public relations education in Brazil started in 1967. The first four-year public relations program was offered by the University of São Paulo's School of Communication and Arts. Today, public relations is taught in Brazil in 72 undergraduate and 24 graduate programs across the nation (CONRERP-SP, 2002). Several Brazilian universities offer masters and doctoral programs in public relations.

IV. Method

IV.1. Sample

In June 2001, the Regional Council of Public Relations 4th Region (i.e., the southern states of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina) collaborated with me in conducting research with its registered members. One hundred forty-eight professionals (76% of whom were women) participated in the study. There were 520 professionals, so this was a 30% response rate (22 envelopes were not deliverable because they had the wrong address). More than half the respondents (66%) occupied managerial positions, had an average of eight years of experience, and had a higher education in public relations (64% hold a master's degree or graduate specialization). They represent the following types of organizations: agencies (23%), manufacturing (12%), service industry (16%), utilities (3%), government (14%), nonprofits

(7%), health care (7%), education (7%), trade and professional associations (5%), and other (6%).

IV.2. Procedures

Participants completed a one-way, self-administered questionnaire. The instrument was developed from the theory and research on the Latin American perspective and its U.S. counterpart, a literature review on the social function of public relations, and my own professional experiences in Latin America. The instrument was first written in English, reviewed by my colleagues, translated into Portuguese by a native speaker, and back translated to English for accuracy. The instrument was pretested by Brazilian professionals and academicians, which generated some corrections to the original instrument.

IV.3. Questionnaire Construction

The final questionnaire consisted of two indices that used a seven-number Likert scale, where 1 was never and 7 was always; one open-ended question; and a demographic section; forty-four variables were included. Efforts were made to include mutually exclusive and exhaustive indicators.

The first index included 19 statements that describe behaviors concerning the social role of public relations professionals involving internal publics. Eleven statements addressed mechanisms to inform and influence top management decision making regarding the organization's internal social environment. Five statements referred to actions carried out by the respondent to inform, educate, and encourage employees' participation in social and cultural programs. Two items stated that the respondent follows a code of professional ethics and a code of professional conducts. Finally, one positive statement indicated that the participant acts as a social conscience of his or her organization, which is at the core of the Latin American perspective on social public relations. (See Appendix 1 for a copy of the questionnaire's English version.)

The second index contained 25 statements related to the social role of the public relations professional involving external publics (e.g., that of governments and communities). Thirteen statements addressed actions and behaviors by the participant to implement social programs with community or government involvement. The twelve remaining statements referred to information and encouragement that the participant provides to his or her organization's top management regarding socially responsible behaviors and actions.

V. Statistical Analyses

SPSS computer software for Windows (V. 11.0) was used to analyze the quantitative data collected. Principal axis factoring (PAF) with an oblimn rotation was used to explore the pattern of responses among the multiple items included in the social role indices; PAF was selected because as Sharma (1996) explains:

> PAF … implicitly assumes that a variable is composed of a common part and a unique part, and the common part is due to the presence of the common factors. The objectives are to first estimate the communalities and then identify the common factors responsible for the commonalities and the correlation among the variables. That is, the PAF technique assumes an implicit underlying factor model. For this reason many researchers choose to use PAF. (p. 108)

Factors with eigenvalues of greater than one were retained for analysis. Items with communality of less than 50% or primary loading (standardized regression coefficient) of less

Table 1: Pattern Matrix

	Factor	Factor	Mean	Std. Dev.
Factor 1: Government and Community Relations	**1**	**2**		
Seek government participation in organizational social programs	.86		3.42	2.20
Request assistance Gov-community outreach	.82		3.13	2.19
Promote symmetrical communication-government	.81		3.43	2.16
Monitor Org-actions harmonize government	.78		3.53	2.16
Government officials-develop social programs	.72		3.47	2.15
Make Org-aware political leaders expectations	.69		4.21	2.11
Encourage Org-support government social policies	.67		4.48	2.13
Community leaders-develop social programs	.67		3.51	2.13
Encourage Org-promote community education	.65		4.89	2.14
Conduct external social audits	.64		3.32	2.02
Encourage attacking social illnesses	.64		4.44	2.21
Encourage Org-promote democratic ideals	.62		4.48	2.31
Encourage developing health education	.58		5.13	1.92
Monitor social changes developing community relations	.58		4.68	2.15
Encourage Org-financial contributions community	.53		4.05	2.23
Encourage Org-financial contribution associations	.53		4.00	2.361
Factor 2: Corporate Social Policy and Employee Relations				
Make Org-aware employee well-being contributions		.87	5.95	1.58
Make Org-aware employee well-being		.80	6.05	1.55
Advise Org-social responsibility		.71	5.63	1.76
Promote symmetrical communication		.66	5.48	1.91
Encourage employee participation community campaigns		.66	5.31	1.94
Articulating social policies		.63	5.63	1.61
Advise articulation workplace safety policies		.62	5.14	2.02
Inform Mgmt social changes		.62	5.80	1.72
Encourage employee participation community		.61	5.44	1.90
Advise articulation human rights policies		.55	4.86	2.15
Make Org-aware community well-being		.55	5.63	1.77
Advise Org-corporate ethics		.55	5.41	1.88
Develop employee campaign better lifestyles		.51	5.14	1.98
Operate as social conscience		.50	5.14	1.93
% of variance explained	40.88	6.92		
Eigenvalue	14.93	14.06		

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 16 iterations.

than .50 in one factor were eliminated to retain the relevant items from 44 variables. This produced a two-factor solution, with 30 activities accounting for 48% of the total variance. The items, factor loadings, means, and standard deviations appear in Table 1. The direct oblimn

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rather than the Varimax rotation was selected because there were noticeable correlations between the factors, and the desire was to reproduce the real world rather than force an independence that did not exist in the data. For the purposes of this research, the first factor will be labeled "Government and Community Relations" because the items loading on it were related to both types of stakeholders. The second factor will be labeled "Corporate Social Policy and Employee Relations" because the indicators loading on this factor included internal aspects of the social role, such as management advisement and employee encouragement and engagement in social activities.

Before continuing with the results, a word of caution is necessary. The main limitation of this study is the relatively small number of respondents for the factor analyses. Should the factor analyses be replicated, the results may not be stable because of the small numbers of participants and the large number of variables, but high internal consistency reduces the likelihood of construct validity issues. Face validity is high.

VI. Findings

Cronbach's alpha was computed for each factor to assess its internal consistency. The two factors obtained a high internal consistency, which means that they are valid measures to describe internal (16 items, Cronbach's alpha .94) and external (14 items, Cronbach's alpha .91) dimensions of the social role of public relations professionals in Latin America.

As described in the questionnaire construction section, indices were developed to measure internal and external behaviors in which public relations professional could engage to enact the social role in Latin America. Factor analysis of the 44 indicators comprising the two main dimensions of the social role was undertaken to determine the dimensions of the construct. A two-factor solution was identified, which explained 48% of the total variance.

The first factor, with 16 indicators, is labeled "Government and Community Relations" because the items loading on it were related to both types of stakeholders. Six groups of indicators composed this factor:

1. Make the organization aware of the expectations of political leaders concerning the organization's involvement in social programs and conduct social audits to determine community members' and leaders' perceptions of the organization's social performance.
2. Monitor the extent to which organizational actions or behaviors harmonize with the interests of local or federal government, and monitor social changes to have them considered by the organization in developing community relations programs.
3. Maintain contacts with government officials to identify their priorities and with community leaders to understand their needs when developing social programs for the organization's involvement.
4. Encourage the organization to support governmental policies that benefit the community, to promote education and democratic ideas within the communities where it operates and/or has influence, to develop communication programs to attack social illnesses that the community faces, and to support programs that promote health education within the community.
5. Encourage the organization to contribute financially to the development of the community where it operates and/or has influence and to give monetary contributions to nonprofit or community organizations or foundations.
6. Seek the participation of governmental agencies in the social programs the organization develops, request the assistance of governmental agencies to jointly develop community

outreach projects or partnerships, and promote two-way communication between the organization and government officials.

The second factor is labeled "Corporate Social Policy and Employee Relations" because the indicators loading on this factor included internal aspects of the social role, such as management advisement, employee encouragement, and engagement in social activities. The indicators of this factor had higher mean ratings than the items in Factor 1, indicating that Brazilian public relations professionals saw internal aspects central to their social role. This factor include five groups of indicators:

1. Operate as the social conscience of the organization by advising management on issues of social responsibility and corporate ethics.
2. Keep management informed of social changes that could affect the relationship between the organization and the community where it operates and/or has influence.
3. Make the organization aware of issues related to employee welfare and, in general, the need to contribute to employees and community well-being.
4. In meeting with management, advocate policies to encourage employees' participation in projects that benefit the community as well as to point out the need to articulate social policies, workplace safety policies and regulations, and human rights policies for the organization.
5. Promote two-way communication between management and employees, encourage employees to volunteer in community organizations, and develop public relations campaigns or communication tools to educate employees about healthy lifestyles.

The first research question is answered by this two-factor solution. The next step would be to explore research questions two and three regarding these two dimensions of the social role of Brazilian public relations professionals. The analysis looks at social role indicators' means by gender and then by the hierarchical level of the public relations respondents.

After conducting the principal axis factor analysis, the two factors extracted were saved as variables. Then, one-way analyses of variance were used two explore the association between the factors and the independent variables: participants' sex and hierarchical level. When a significant relation was found, the association between the individual indicators' means and the independent variables where further explored by utilizing Anova tests.

The study's data show significant a relationship between Factor 1 (f=4.88, df2/123, *p*=.029) and Factor 2 (f=21.18, df2/123, *p*=.0001) and the "sex of respondents." Thus, male professionals appear to enact the external social role (i.e., "Government and Community Relations") more frequently than female professionals do. In contrast, female professionals tend to be responsible for the internal dimension of the social role (i.e., "Corporate Policy and Employee Relations") more often than male professionals. This answers research question two.

Looking at the association between the factors and the hierarchical levels of respondents (RQ3), a significant relationships was found between Factor 1 and the hierarchical level (f=10.54, df2/119, *p*=.002). That is, those who occupy the highest position in the hierarchy tend to be in charge of "Government and Community Relations" more often than those in the lower levels. The association between Factor 2 and hierarchical level was not significant (f=1.07, df2/119, *p*=.302).

To answer research questions four and five, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation with one-tailed significance tests were used because all the variables involved were continuous indicators. Factor 1, "Government and Community Relations," was positively associated to the years of professional experience of participants (*r*=.23, significant at *p*=0.01, a definite but small relationship [Guilford, 1956]). The association between Factor 2, "Corporate Social Policy and Employee Relations," was negative and significant at $p=0.01$ ($r=-.30$, a definite but small relationship). The correlation between Factor 1 by years of education resulted in a small positive relationship, significant at the $p=0.05$ level ($r=.24$). Finally, the association between Factor 2 and education years was found negative and significant at the $p=0.01$ level, a definite but small relationship.

VII. Discussion and Conclusion

Two main dimensions, internal and external, seem to compose the construct social role of public relations professionals in Brazil. The two dimensions were measured with reliable indices that could be used for future replications and expansion of this conceptualization, not only in other parts of Brazil, but in other Latin American countries. The indicators of the two factors extracted explain the actions that a professional performs to increase his or her involvement as "social conscience of the organization" and perhaps as a change agent or agent of social transformation.

The second factor, "Corporate Policy and Employee Relations," showed higher mean scores, which could explain the emphasis that the public relations function in Brazil has on internal issues and stakeholders. It is not easy to partner with Latin American governments because they are known for being bureaucratic and centralized. The welfare of Latin American citizens has been in the hands of governmental agencies. Until recently, the private and nonprofit sectors in Latin America have not played a major role in this regard, and Brazil has not been an exception. Since the transition to democracy in 1985, however, Brazilian organizations have become more active in community outreach. There is still mistrust about government, which is characterized as being authoritarian and inefficient. This may be why the mean scores of the first factor, "Government and Community Relations," are lower. It is possible that progress toward participative democracy, voluntarism, and a stronger civil society will increase organizations' involvement with government and community initiatives.

The first factor, though, encapsulates a strategic approach to public relations: monitoring (formative research), counseling, planning, implementing, evaluating corporate social perceptions, and fostering stewardship or partnership initiatives with external stakeholders. If practices follow this model, public relations professionals in Brazil and other Latin American countries would contribute to the betterment of their political and social environments and, thus, to the survival and further productivity of their organizations.

The findings reported here concerning the association between the two factors and the sex of public relations practitioners reinforce the feminist view that women are discriminated against in society. Although Brazil is considered a moderately feminine culture (Hofstede, 1983), male professionals seem to represent the organization outside its boundaries. There is hope, however: The female respondents of this study often perform the internal social role, which includes advising top management on corporate social policies. Participation of Brazilian women in corporate decision making could be the answer to overcoming discrimination and to enacting the external social role more often.

A large sample is needed to explore the intercept between sex of the participants and hierarchical level they occupy, which was another limitation of this study. Multivariate analysis was not used because of the small sample. Nevertheless, a post hoc analysis was performed to explore the association between the variables sex and hierarchical level, and no significance was found.

The findings that inform the last two questions about years of professional experience, years of education, and the two factors further support the fact that to enact the external social role, "Government and Community Relations," Brazilian professionals need tenure and advanced knowledge. This will enable them to be up to the challenge their complex society presents. As democracy has advanced, Brazilian organizations have fought a strong fight for public recognition. The emerging society is greatly oriented toward results. Quality, environmental protection, and social responsibility have become relevant matters for private and public organizations.

This study could be adapted and expanded to explore the social role of public relations professionals in the United States. After September 11, 2001, U.S. society appears to have an increased sense of community and solidarity and research is being done in the areas of community involvement and collaboration. The U.S. scholars included in this paper are leading the promotion of this more social or humanitarian approach of public relations.

VIII. Notes

1. Piore (2001) explains that social intermediaries are "institutions that mediate between the economy and other realms of social activity and maintain a balance between them. Among institutions of this kind are trade unions and governmental organizations but also cooperatives, household-based enterprises, religious institutions, and, increasingly, networks of professionals and business people based on race, sex, ethnicity and religion" (p. 339). For Latin American scholars, it is important that public relations professionals help institutions achieve and maintain balanced and positive interactions.

2. Emilio Solórzano-Hernández was the president of CONFIARP from 1996 to 2000.

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Appendix 1

University of Florida—Regional Council of Public Relations, Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina

Social Role of Brazilian Public Relations Professionals

Please take a few minutes to express your views about the roles you play as a public relations practitioner as well as your opinions about the legal status of the profession in Brazil. Your identity will be kept confidential. Your name will never be used in the analysis of the questionnaire's responses. Only summarized responses will be analyzed and reported. If you agree to participate, please return the completed questionnaire to the information/registration booth at this event.

I. The statements that follow describe different aspects of what public relations practitioners do to perform a social and political role in their organizations.

- If the statement describes something that you **never** do, circle **"1."**
- If it is something that you **always** do, circle **"7."**
- If you do it occasionally, circle the number that best describes your work.

(Note: If you work in an agency, circle the number that best describes your work with your major client)

	Never					**Always**	
I keep management informed of social changes that could affect the relationship between my organization and the community where it operates and/or has influence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I keep management informed of political changes that could affect the relationship between my organization and the local or federal government	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In meetings with management, I point out the need to articulate social policies for my organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I make my organization aware of issues related to employee welfare	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I advocate policies to encourage employees' participation in projects that benefit the community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage employees to volunteer in community organizations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I conduct social audits to determine employees' perceptions of my organization's social performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I make my organization aware of the need to contribute to the well-being of its employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I promote open/two-way communication between management of my organization and its employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I follow my organization's code of conduct to guide my practice of community relations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I follow the Parliament/CONRERP code of professional ethics to guide my counsel to my organization on social matters	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I develop public relations campaigns or communication tools to educate employees about healthy lifestyles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I coordinate cultural activities for our employees so they preserve indigenous/autochthonous artistic expressions and traditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I operate as the social conscience of my organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I advise my organization on issues of social responsibility	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I advise my organization on issues of corporate ethics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In meetings with management, I point out the need to articulate environmental protection policies for my organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In meetings with management, I point out the need to articulate workplace safety policies and regulations for my organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In meetings with management, I point out the need to articulate human rights policies for my organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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	Never						Always
I evaluate possible projects that my organization could develop to benefit the community where it operates or has influence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I conduct social audits to determine community members' and leaders' perceptions of my organization's social performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I maintain contacts with community leaders to understand their needs when developing social programs for my organization's involvement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I maintain contacts with government officials to identify their priorities when developing social projects for my organization's involvement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I make my organization aware of the needs and expectations of the community where it operates and/or has influence concerning the organization's involvement with community development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I make my organization aware of the expectations of political leaders concerning the organization's involvement in social programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I make my organization aware of the need to contribute to the well-being of the community where it operates and/or has influence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my organization to be part of the community where it operates	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I promote open/two-way communication between my organization and government officials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I promote open/two-way communication between my organization and the community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I monitor the extent to which organizational actions or behaviors harmonize with the interests of the community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I monitor the extent to which organizational actions or behaviors harmonize with the interests of local or federal government	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I monitor social changes to have them considered by my organization in developing community relations programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I take into consideration community expectations when planning public relations strategies for the community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my organization to develop programs to promote the preservation of national and local artistic expressions and traditions within the community where it operates and/or has influence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my organization to develop communication programs to promote health education within the community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my organization to develop communication programs to attack social illnesses that our community faces, such as drug addiction, sexually transmitted diseases, domestic violence and racial discrimination.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I request the assistance of governmental agencies to jointly develop community outreach projects or partnerships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am responsible for ensuring that my organization's behavior meets social expectations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my organization to contribute financially to the development of the community where it operates and/or has influence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I seek the participation of governmental agencies in the social programs my organization develops	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my organization to support governmental policies that benefit the community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my organization to give monetary contributions to nonprofit or community organizations/foundations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my organization to promote education within the communities where it operates and/or has influence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my organization to promote democratic ideals within the communities where it operates and/or has influence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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II. Please add in the following space any comment you may have concerning the social role of public relations professionals in Brazil.

III. Demographics

1. In which region do you predominantly practice public relations? (Check one)

___Northwest ___Southwest ___Northeast ___Southeast

2. Which category best describes your organization? (Check one)

___Public relations agency
___Integrated marketing communication agency
___Consumer package goods
___Consumer services (finance, travel, insurance, etc.)
___Basic materials—metals, paper, glass, chemicals, etc.
___Public utility
___Non-profit organization
___Educational institution
___Advertising agency
___Consumer durable goods
___Industrial
___Diversified
___Government
___Hospital/Health care
___Professional or trade association
___Other (Please specify: ____)

3. How many years of formal education beyond high school have you completed? ___ Years

3.1. *Your highest education degree*: ______________________________________

4. If completed a university degree, what was your field of study? ______________________________

5. How many years have you worked full time in public relations? _____years

6. *Your age*: _____ years old.

7. *Sex*: ___Male ___Female

8. Are you the highest-ranking public relations practitioner in your organization? ___Yes ___No

8.1. *Your title*: ____

Thank you very much for your participation!

Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. Mail it atyour earliest convenience. If you want a summary of the results of this study, please write your electronic address or mail address or enclose your business card and we will be glad to send you a copy.

Cross-national conflict shifting:

A conceptualization and expansion in an international public relations context

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Cross-national conflict shifting:

A conceptualization and expansion in an international public relations context

Abstract

The main purpose of this paper is to introduce, illustrate and expand the concept of "cross-cultural conflict shifting" as it relates to the international public relations arena. The illustration is accomplished by summarizing a legal incident involving America Online Latin America (AOLA) in Brazil with repercussions in the U.S. and European financial markets. After the conceptualization is expanded, theory building and research opportunities in an international public relations context will be introduced.

Like all new trends, globalization of corporations in the Information Age has been accompanied by some unanticipated consequences. One of these consequences is increasing scrutiny of firms' international operations. A small incident at a foreign subsidiary that might not have warranted a mention in a parent company's annual report just ten years ago can now become the focus of an annual meeting, due to the expanding agenda-setting power of three key groups: activists, shareholders and the mass media. These groups, in turn, have seen their agenda-setting role in corporations expand greatly in the past few years, due largely to the explosive power of Internet communications.

Corporate Watch and Global Exchange are just two transnational[1] activist organizations that are overseeing the actions of for-profit corporations crossing borders for expanding markets, diversifying their businesses, or seeking optimum legal, political, labor and economic conditions. International news agencies (e.g., Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters) and global media (e.g. CNN, BBC, Independent Television News) are also reporters of incidents in which transnational businesses are involved directly or indirectly. Both activist groups and the press have successfully utilized the Internet medium to gain immediate and far-reaching attention for the activities of corporations operating outside their own borders. They can make a national issue become international and even impact the parties involved in their home, host and alternative locations all over the world.

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[1] The term "transnational" is used in this article as "a new management mentality" (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1989, p. 17). This mentality entails "[d]ifferentiated contributions by national units to integrated worldwide operations" (p. 65).

The main purpose of this paper is to introduce, illustrate and expand the concept of "cross-national conflict shifting" as it relates to the international public relations arena. The illustration is accomplished by summarizing a legal incident involving America Online Latin America (AOLA) in Brazil with repercussions in the U.S. and European financial markets. After the conceptualization is expanded, theory building and research opportunities in an international public relations context will be introduced.

The Concept of Cross-National Conflict Shifting

Cross-National Conflict Shifting is a concept introduced by Welge and Holtbrügge in 1998. They extended the definition of the concept in the second edition of their book *International Management* (2001), "multinational corporations are not just confronted anymore with national, but increasingly globally active interest groups, which not only observe the behavior of single subsidiaries in the respective host nations, but also the behavior of multinationals as a whole" (p. 323). Thus, cross-national conflict shifting means that "interest groups in one country condemn multinational corporations for what they are doing in other

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Organizations following this model develop knowledge in specific national units and shared it worldwide. Three procedures are key: Worldwide learning, multinational flexibility and national responsiveness. This structural model can be observed in profit, nonprofit, governmental, non-governmental organizations and activist groups.

countries" (Berg & Holtbrügge, 2001, p. 112)—or for what there are not doing in other countries, it might be added. In other words, "conflicts are not fought anymore in the country in which they originated, but in the country in which the interest groups can best push through their position" (Welge and Holtbrügge, 2001, p. 324). Welge and Holtbrügge (2001) elaborate:

> [T]hose conflicts will have impacts on the activities in other countries because of numerous interdependences. ... Due to those dangers a centralized and worldwide standardized public affairs [or public relations] management is not able to recognize and nurture in time nationally different corporate affairs and their relationships to the predominant socio-political interest groups. The responsibility for public affairs management has to be delegated for that reason to the respective corporate units, which—given proper selection and training—can execute these tasks more effectively due to their regional proximity and personal contacts. (p. 325)

Senior public relations professionals working for an organization with operations in more than one country deal with host, home and transnational publics. Host publics, for example, are local and national stakeholders in a country where the practitioner's organization operates. Home publics are stakeholders physically located in the country where the organization's headquarters functions. Finally, transnational publics are groups or global media with an extensive network of subsidiaries or branches all over the globe or with just an efficient virtual connection system. Transnational publics are also stakeholders located in countries other than the affected nation and the home country, where the organization operates as well.

Beginning the Expansion of the Concept

There are organizational decisions, actions and operations that affect publics in one country and have an impact internationally. This impact seems to be greater at the home country of the organization or organizations involved, which could be explained by the relevance and proximity of organization for the home publics. Domestic conflicts are increasingly shifting worldwide because of the growth of international transactions, transportation and communication, especially information technology.

The events, actions or operations of an organization that most attract the attention of a wide array of competing voices appear to be labor, environmental, human rights, employee treatment and workplace safety issues; that is, controversial issues that call the interest and attention of host, home and transnational stakeholders. Today, these aspects are being addressed in the literature and corporate publications concerning corporate social performance (Wood, 1991).

The host stakeholders that would notice any irregularity in an organization's behavior are community groups, local politicians and non-governmental organizations. This will expand or remain under control depending on the magnitude of the event and the expediency of organizational responses, among other factors. For instance, international news agencies and activist groups can pick up a news report from the local or national media.

A Battle in Brazil Moves North—Background

A case study from Latin America will serve to illustrate the concept of cross-national conflict shifting. When America Online (AOL), the largest Internet service provider in the world, took its first steps onto Latin American shores in 1999, the world was, quite literally, watching. Latin America is the world's fastest growing Internet market, with compound growth of 38%

forecast for the years 2000 to 2005 (Hoover's Online, 2002). More than that, only 2% of Latin Americans were online in 2000, with only 4% of households owning computers (Hu, 2000). Industry and investors were anxious to see how AOL's hyper-successful U.S. business model would fare in this challenging but potential-filled region.

To facilitate its entry into the new marketplace AOL needed a well-established regional business partner. It chose Venezuelan media powerhouse Cisneros Group, one of the leading media groups in the Americas ("Corporate Overview," n.d.), as a partner. AOL Latin America (AOLA), a $200 million joint venture (Barnes, 2000), was incorporated at the beginning of 1999 ("Timeline," n.d.).

AOLA's entry into the Brazilian market, considered by many the linchpin of any successful Latin American strategy, did not go smoothly. It entered the marketplace after other important groups, including Brazil's Universo OnLine (UOL) and Spain's Telefonica Group, had gained a foothold in the ISP business sector (Hoover's Online, 2002). The company's uphill battle for customers was compounded by problems with its initial CD-ROMs, which reformatted computers without notifying consumers and were recalled (Smith, 2001). This created serious image problems for an "outsider" company in the Brazilian market.[2]

AOLA's first advertising campaign in Brazil also proved problematic. The company chose the tagline, "The largest because it is the best," (Wagner, 2000). However, UOL sued, saying that while AOL was the *world's* largest ISP, UOL—and not AOLA—was *Brazil's* largest ISP. The local courts agreed with UOL, and AOLA, in another setback, was forced to pull its advertising campaign (Wagner, 2000). Brazil's advertising watchdog group, Conar, sanctioned the company (Smith, 2001).

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[2] Since its entry into Brazil, AOLA has also entered Argentina, Mexico and Puerto Rico, but Brazilian operations remain the company's largest.

Viewed through the prism of dependency theory, a hallmark of current economic thought in developing nations (Wakefield, 1996), the initial Brazilian reaction to AOLA's market entry was predictable—and possibly avoidable. According to Wakefield, dependency theorists view "foreign media as tools for continuing imperialism and economic domination," (p. 26). The company appears to have underestimated the nationalism—and to some extent, isolationism—of the Brazilian market, and its feelings of competitiveness with the United States. Even the company's name—America Online—plays into Latin American preconceptions about the United States, since it indicates that the United States is synonymous with "America," when in fact it is only a part of the two-continent hemisphere. As a symbol of the United States, AOL probably should have been more sensitive to the possibility of negative consequences from an advertising campaign that pitted "big" (U.S.) against "small" (Brazil), no matter how tangentially.

The Conflict Crosses Borders

By the autumn of 2001, AOLA had worked its way to fourth place in the Brazilian ISP market, behind UOL, MSN-Microsoft and a local free access provider known as iG (Smith, 2001). However the company's future was far from secure. Although AOLA passed the one million-user mark in September 2001, its operating losses rose to US$72.3 million in the second quarter (Karp, 2001). The problem for was compounded by uncertainty in the Latin American economy as a result of the financial crisis in Argentina, and investors were eager to see the company begin to convert its free trial users into paying customers (Karp, 2001).

In November 2001, AOLA filed suit against Brasil Online (BOL), a subsidiary of UOL, for an advertising campaign that it characterized as "misleading" and "profoundly discriminatory toward foreigners, especially North Americans," (Smith, 2001). The television, print and billboard campaign used a number of graphics and taglines, all comparing the price of BOL's service (R$9) to AOL's service (R$34.95), which were identified under the headings "Brasil" and "America." At the bottom, copy indicated that people who would pay so much more for ISP access were stupid or laughable (Smith, 2001).

According to Fernando Figueredo, vice president of corporate communications for AOLA, the company sued in order to "preserve the dignity of [AOLA's] customers," (Smith, 2001). From AOLA's point of view, the advertisements in question represented a misleading price comparison. The AOL price of R$34.95 includes services such as e-mail, news, shopping, search engines and chat rooms; the BOL price of R$9 is a promotional price (it goes up to R$19.90 after six months) that includes a barebones service, with limited access to anything beyond e-mail (Smith, 2001). Parent company UOL's service, more comparable to AOL's service, actually costs more than AOL, at R$39.95 (Smith, 2001).

According to Victor Ribeiro, BOL's general director, "What we are showing consumers is a fact. It's not illegal to compare prices in ads," (Smith, 2001). It costs R$9 to access the Internet with BOL and R$34.95 to access the Internet with AOL. The fact that BOL chose to compare its prices AOLA's, and not UOL's, was simply a business decision. Culturally, it makes sense in the collectivistic Brazilian market, to compare yourself with an outsider, rather than with a member of the family.

The first Brazilian judge to hear the case granted AOLA an injunction, forcing BOL to suspend its advertising campaign (Smith, 2001). However, on appeal the injunction was overturned, allowing BOL to proceed with the campaign ("Technology: Brazil," 2001). Judge Preuss of Sao Paulo said that he did not find the ads discriminatory, finding that the main message was one of price differences between the two ISPs ("Technology: Brazil," 2001).

The main way in which this conflict moved beyond Brazil's borders was through the international financial and technology press. The financial press (e.g. *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Financial Times*), whose main constituency is investors, has a keen interest in AOLA's ability to navigate the Brazilian marketplace. AOLA went public in August 2000 at a share price of US$8 (Hu, 2000). That was down considerably from the initial target share price of US$15 anticipated for the initial public offering (IPO) when AOL and Cisneros Group filed the original IPO documents (Hu, 2000). Since the IPO, the share price has tumbled to US$2.80 per share as of February 19, 2002 (Yahoo! Finance, 2002). AOLA stockholders, as well as stockholders of its parent, AOL, whose success is in part tied to the success of its subsidiaries, have an enormous financial interest in AOLA's activities in the Brazilian market.

The company's shares, like those of many international companies, have faced pressure on for a number of reasons in recent months, including the stalling of the world's largest economies, the financial collapse of Argentina and the after effects of the September 11th terrorist attacks, which left worldwide investors less willing to risk capital abroad. According to a report in *The Economist*, all of the principle measures of world economic integration were down in 2001 ("Is Globalisation," 2002). The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, or UNCTAD, reported that foreign direct investment was down 40% in 2001, compared with 2000 ("Foreign investment flows," 2002).

However, at least some of the problems with the share price are attributable to the market's apprehension about AOLA's ability to succeed in Latin America. It was this uneasiness that brought the incident across borders, to the home country (the U.S.), as well as to other countries with significant numbers of institutional and individual stockholders (the industrialized nations of Europe and Asia).

The technology press was also eager to report the story. AOL is the world's largest ISP. Its success or failure in Latin America acts as a barometer for other hi-tech companies wishing to do business in the region. The Web-based technology press, represented by such companies as Lycos Finance, Wired News and CNET, has the ability to instantly move a story across borders, with reports from Brazil available almost immediately to interested parties all over the world.

Analyzing a Cross-National Conflict Shift

The AOLA case described above is a classic example of a cross-national conflict shift. The analysis of the case includes characteristics of the issue, ways the conflict reached international audiences, and parties involved or affected.

AOLA has very distinctive characteristics that makes the corporation the focus of attention in Brazil: its headquarters is in a developed country, it is a company with high profile and visibility level, and its technology business is complex and consumer oriented. Other elements of this case are the fact that it happened in an emerging economy and involved a lawsuit, which is a serious consequence and represents high level of a dispute.

AOLA's legal conflict with BOL was spread out internationally mainly through the specialized media. Magazines, newspapers and Internet media reported the incident without delays. The U.S. investors could have been the major targets of those stories.

There were many parties involved in the conflict. The principal public was the Brazilian current and potential costumers of AOLA. Another main public was the U.S. shareholders. Direct parties were BOL and UOL representatives, and AOLA officials as well as the judiciary system in Brazil. Despite the focus of the dispute on the direct parties involved, clients and shareholders were the final judges of the cross-national conflict, because they are the ones who use the service or value the company's stocks.

The AOLA case is just one type of cross-national conflict shifting. This case facilitates the development of a series of assumptions about the nature, consequences and responses of such international conflicts. Following are hypothetical elements of a cross-national conflict shifting for future analyses.

Characteristics of a national conflict that could shift borders: Involves organizations with a headquarters in another country, primarily transnational businesses and multilateral organizations (e.g., International Monetary Fund and World Bank); implicates transnational business with high profile or visibility level (i.e., AOLA, Coca Cola, McDonalds, Nike, Starbucks, etc.); concerns complex (i.e., technology, food and beverage) and controversial industries, such as pharmaceutical, oil and chemical; very often happens in developing nations or emergent economies, such as India, China or Brazil; includes trendy causes, such as violation of women rights, defense of indigenous population, environmental damage, child labor, poor workers' compensation, legal suits, major accidents in corporate facilities, etc.

Ways a conflict reaches international audiences: Small and medium size local or national groups can activate issues through demonstrations, boycotts, or new information technology (Internet); local or national media disclosure that is picked up by activist groups or international news agencies; international news agencies first report the conflict; demonstration of protests in front of the headquarters in the home country or during world economic, trade or social forums; special investigative reporting of a major print or broadcast media of a developed nation, such as *The New York Times, The Times* of London, and CBS 60 Minutes; global media coverage, such as CNN, BBC or Independent Television News.

There are many parties involved in a cross-national conflict: Affected publics, such as victims of an accident, employees, local community; local, national and international activist groups; national and international non-governmental organizations; local, national (host/home countries) and international news media; local and federal governments of the host country as well as the governmental agencies of the home country; national or international religious organizations; transactional businesses; multilateral organizations; global organizations, such as World Trade Organizations; celebrities affected or involved; regional trade groups or unions, such as the European Union and the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR).

There will be diverse organizational responses and strategies in dealing in preventing or dealing with a cross-national conflict shift: Environmental scanning , issues tracking/management, risk/crisis communication plans, lobbying efforts, government relations, internal communication/employee relations, coordination and control mechanisms (management), media relations (feature stories, fact sheets, pitch letters, news releases, video news releases, corporate videos, Websites, news conferences, media kits, company/site media tours, in-company/site/media outlet interviews, community relations, labor relations, investor relations, grassroots or front groups establishment, institutional or issue advertising, correspondences and letters, including letters to the editor, among other tactics and strategies.

The strength and the lifespan of a conflict could be determined by several aspects, which as a consequence may influence organizational responses to a cross-national conflict shift. The first aspect is direct or indirect involvement of the high profile organization in the conflict. For instance, a recent cross-national conflict shift implicated one of the world's best-known athletic shoe manufacturers. While many companies follow similar practices to Nike's, its name increased cross-national interest in the story. News stories highlighted the company's involvement: "Nike … does not own a single piece of equipment for making shoes or athletic clothes; instead, its products are made by some 400 factories in 43 countries," ("The shame," 1999).

Even less well-known companies can become involved in cross-national conflict shifts, simply by virtue of having their name associated with a controversial issue. However, even very large companies can sometimes avoid the full impact of a cross-national conflict shift when their names are not directly linked to the conflict. For instance, an 830-kilometer oil pipeline is being built in the rainforest of Ecuador, creating strong protests from local and international conservation groups. A consortium called OCP Ecuador leads the project, which "is made up of oil powerhouses including Occidental Petroleum and Kerr-McGee of the United States, Canada's Alberta Energy, Spain's Repsol YPF and Argentine companies Perez Companc and Techint" (Wyss, 2001, p. 66). These companies have had less bad press in the United States because their names are not directly associated with the pipeline. From the activists' standpoint, that may not be true but on a broad consumer level, it can be expected that direct mention of names is a barometer of how involved the public relations department should be or what types of communication strategies it may implement. Here a proposition could be formulated: A direct involvement and mention of an organization in a cross-national conflict shift will demand more expedience and proactive public relations response.

Another factor that might determine the salience of a conflict would be the significance or importance of international shareholders of the organization(s) involved, i.e., impact on market values of a company's stock, such as the case introduced in this paper. Shareholders of any large publicly traded company in the United States, Europe or Asia will closely scrutinize and demand information about major cross-national conflicts that could impact the value of their investment. In such cases, greater investor relations strategies should be in place.

The degree or level of attractiveness of the host country where the situation developed, e.g., Brazil, as an emergent economy, would call the attention of the international community. In fact, the largest South American country and the 9th world economy is surprising the world with well-orchestrated campaigns against tobacco consumption and the high cost of AIDS drugs. "Brazil instituted one of the world's most comprehensive bans on cigarette advertising, gradually forbidding it everywhere except the counters where cigarettes are sold—even on Brazilian-based Web sites" (Karp, 2002, p. A1). Any transnational organization that faces a conflict in Brazil will be likely to receive a great deal of attention due to the country's prominence on the world scene, its role as a bellwether for Latin America, the high level of activism found among its population and a strong inclination toward government intervention in national economic affairs.

The type of issue involved influences the time it takes for a conflict to move across borders, and the attention given to it once it moves across. New technology issues seem to garner international attention quite quickly. In the case of AOLA, its Internet business has many followers who are paying attention to any move, development, success or failure of the leading companies of the industry. The same can be said for those conflicts or issues involving other new technologies, such as drug development and genetic engineering.

The degree of identification of a high profile organization with its home country, such as the case of McDonalds or Starbucks, will influence the strength and salience of the cross-national conflict. Representing U.S. interests, Seattle-based Starbucks has more than 5,000 stores worldwide and it is often the focus of activist protests:

> During the now famous kick-off to the anti-corporate globalization protest at the 1999 World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle, violent activists struck a Starbucks store, overturning

equipment and tossing coffee bags about. One activist interviewed at the time said they had nothing against Starbucks "per se" but they were concerned about the danger to family-run businesses from corporations such as Starbucks. (Maloy, 2002).

The level or degree of human interest will also capture the attention of international audiences and activist groups, making a cross-national conflict more salient. For example, "On Dec. 15, the human-rights organization Global Exchange is planning a Nationwide Day of Action against Folgers because the leading roaster has so far decided against joining the program to sell 'Fair Trade' certified coffee" (Lemos, 2001, p. FP8). Fair trade certification guarantees a minimum price of US$1.26 a pound for the farmer's co-operatives enrolled in the program. As the brand with sales are more than $1 billion (Head, 2000), the company is instantly recognizable to most U.S. consumers, making it an obvious target for activists who want to bring attention to a conflict that is happening beyond the borders of the United States.

Other aspects that could determine the impact of a cross-national conflict are:

- The type of market and level of consumer's sophistication of the home market;
- The relationship of the issue to a tangible product, raw material or natural resources, especially in terms of exploitation, manufacturing, etc.; that is, tangible, boycottable products are more likely to receive attention than intangible services;
- And the degree of intervention, interest or involvement of the host government; that is, in projects of national interest the host government will play a major role, such as the intervention of the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment when OCP (an energy consortium) cut down trees to build an oil pipeline through an ecological sensitive forest in Ecuador (Wyss, 2001).

The continuing expansion of this conceptualization of "cross-national conflict shifting," including the identification and descriptions of all the organizational and contextual variables that might cause the strengthening—or the weakening—of an international issue, should be the goal of future focused investigations.

Research Potential for Theory Development

Research in public relations is evolving. In particular, "a growing body of scholarship and commentary has addressed the theory and practice of international public relations" (Taylor, 2001, p. 630). Nevertheless, more theory grounded studies are needed. Theoretical approaches from diverse disciplines may be borrowed for that endeavor (Wakefield, 1996). This paper borrows the concept of cross-national conflict shifting from the discipline of international management and expands this conceptualization to inform international public relations practice and scholarship.

The concept of cross-national conflict shifting needs further qualitative and quantitative exploration to fully understand its impacts for those engage in international public relations efforts. At least three aspects must be taken into account to develop a sound theory of the impact and lessons provide by such cross-borders issues: 1) development of models backed by the illustration of case studies, 2) further exploration of the coordination mechanisms that transnational organizations use to manage the public relations function and, therefore, deal with cross-national conflict shifting, and 3) adaptation of specific theories, for instance, media relations theories, to an international or multicultural context. In developing a theoretical framework for the study of cross-national conflict shifting, material can be drawn from a number of disciplines outside of the public relations area.

The first body of literature might be drawn from the field of anthropology, particularly Development-Induced Displacement and Resettlement's studies (DIDR), which explain the evolution of local conflicts with community involvement that become international battles with transnational activists participation (e.g., Cernea, 1995; Dwivedi, 1999; Muggah, 2000; Oliver-Smith, in press). Research on popular resistance to DIDR has picked up thanks to the activities and support of the Refugee Studies Centre of the University of Oxford. Oliver-Smith (in press) explains the escalation of a conflict is possible through a "cascade effect" mainly motored by new information technology. He argues that transnational computer-driven networks have the capacity to mobilize public opinion. For instance, the arrest of an activist in India can create global protests within hours through the so-called cascade effect. Oliver-Smith notes that thus far no predictable pattern of linkages among involved parties in the progression of resistance has been established. Such linkages, and their effects on the practice of public relations, form another area for future study.

A second body of literature may be drawn from the area of international business. In specific, the literature concerning the study of coordination and control mechanisms would be informative (e.g., Cesaria, 2000; Cray, 1984; Ghoshal, Korine & Szulanski, 1994; Martinez & Jarillo, 1989). Molleda (2000a, 2000b) uses international business literature to empirically explore the balance between integration and localization efforts to manage the public relations function in transnational corporations.

Molleda (2000a) reports: 1) The more a subsidiary uses integrative communication devices (e.g., Web site, Intranet, annual report) to communicate with internal audiences, the better the integration of its public relations function with the overall international operation; 2) the better the overall communication quality of public relations information received by a subsidiary, the better the integration of its public relations function with the overall international operation; 3) The better the quality of the parent company-subsidiary relationship, the better the integration of the public relations function; 4) The higher the level of corporate socialization in a subsidiary's public relations function, the higher the levels of global efficiency (i.e., resources sharing) and worldwide learning (i.e., know-how, knowledge, experiences exchanging) of that subsidiary's public relations function; 5) the higher the integration of a subsidiary concerning its public relations function, the higher the overall levels of transnational mentality reported by that subsidiary (i.e., "Differentiated contributions by national units to integrated worldwide operations," Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1989, p. 65); and 6) the higher the communication quality a subsidiary reports it receives from various public relations staffs worldwide, the higher the overall level of the transnational mentality indicators that subsidiary reports. Thus, a balance between integration and localization of the public relations function should allow transnational organizations to response efficiently to cross-national conflict shifts.

Lim (2002) expands Molleda's research by conceptualizing an Integration-Responsiveness Grid and hypothesizing that integration would be positively associated with internal efficiency and responsiveness with external effectiveness. These types of theorizing and research would assist to understand the implications of cross-national conflict shifting for international public relations management.

A third body could be drawn from mass communications and public relations. Zoch and Molleda (2000) introduce a model of media relations by exploring the interconnection of framing, information subsidies and agenda building. They found evidence that the three theoretical approaches complement each other and facilitate the understanding of the relationship between organizations and media outlets, specifically during the news gathering process. A few authors have studied information subsidies and agenda building, but the three approaches have not been combined in a single study. Models of media relation such as the one proposed by Zoch and Molleda can be adapted to an international context to explain organizational responses, both at home and at the host country, when dealing with a cross-national conflict shifts. The body of knowledge in issues management and crisis communication could also be part of that international media relations model.

Conclusion

This paper had the purpose of introducing, illustrating and expanding the concept of cross-national conflict shifting. The concept defined by German scholars now has made its appearance in an international public relations realm. This concept may help to shift our research focus from analyzing how public relations is practiced in a seemingly isolated country to analyzing the interaction between interlocutors in an open transnational market place of ideas and economic transactions.

Public relations scholars interested in the exploring the international perspective from a different viewpoint could use the concept of cross-national conflict shifting. Those with a corporate perspective could focus on organizational vigilance and responses when issues can become conflict that could cross borders. Similarly, those approaching public relations with an alternative view could use the concept to explain international activism involvement in shifting a conflict that is identified in one nation back to the country where transnational businesses have their national headquarters.

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